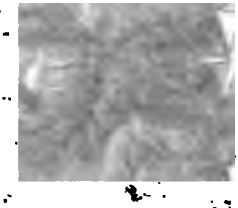
EARNING A LIVING.



EARNING A LIVING;

OR,

FROM HAND TO MOUTH.

Scenes from the Homes of Working People.

BY

M. A. S. BARBER.

"Jesus saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother. . . . they were fishers."—MATT. iv. 18.

"Aquila, with his wife Priscilla . . . . by their occupation they were tent-makers."— ACTS xviii. 2, 3.

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET & CO., BERNERS STREET.
1861.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHN GREIG & SON.

PREFACE.

THE author bespeaks not only the kind attention of those into whose hands this book may fall, but their sympathy and help. Some of the chapters have been published before in *The Coral Missionary Magazine;* and been, it is hoped, productive of good. The author believes, that so many Englishwomen are now awakened to a sense of their privileges as helpers in the Church of Christ, that they will gladly listen to any one who says to them, "Here is a vacant corner in the vineyard, come and work with us!" Such is the message of this little volume; may it receive a blessing from the Lord, and a welcome from those who love Him!

9 Sussex Square Brighton.

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Introductory Chapter.

"SALUTE the beloved Persis, who laboured much in the Lord." The ministrations of women in the Church of Christ have been recognised from the earliest ages. Priscilla aided in expounding to Apollos "the way of God more perfectly," and is called by St Paul, "my helper in Christ Jesus." Many a Priscilla, many a "beloved Persis," is found amongst us now, and many more exist, who would gladly be the "servants of the Church," if a way were opened to them to engage in that service.

There is a large class of women in the present day who, from the state of society, are excluded from the natural duties of wife and mother, and the happiness of whose existence is dimmed, by its being without an object. Numbers of them, we believe, would gladly exchange such a life for one of active usefulness. We honour the large staff of female workers which exists,—the district visitor, the Sunday-school teacher, the missionary collector; but we are per-

minded that not one-seventh part of the work in the Church, is now discharged by women which properly falls to their share, and which they would be prompt to undertake, if an organisation were formed enabling them to do so. Human beings, by the laws of God, work better in a body, than by desultory and individual efforts; encouragements are multiplied, difficulties are lessened.

Schools, prisons, hospitals, work-houses, the town hovel, and the country cottage—all invite the godly, conscientious, prudent, and sensible female missionary. No great reform can take place in our poor and criminal population which does not extend to women, and no one can teach a woman her duties as such but a woman, and none, we think, better than in our Saxon ancestors' sense of the term, a Hlaldige—a lady. Let it not be thought that she cannot, will not, that the duty must wholly devolve upon the lower and uneducated classes. Let us dismiss such an idea. Surely there is sufficient devotion to Christ amongst us to prove it an erroneous one.

Some years ago, the proposal of the employment of female agency, was made to the secretary of one of our large societies for home missions. It was not accepted; but we think that since that time two events have sufficiently manifested its feasibility,—the success of the Bible-women and sisterhoods, which latter have been a powerful means in the hands of a body in the Church, of attracting religious women earnest for employment. The labours of the Bible-

women we honour, but there are great objections to sisterhoods in our Church, however they may be constituted.

The ready response made to the former effort, the Bible-women, and the hearty sympathy so rightly manifested with it, lead us to hope that the time is now come, when the cherished project of years, may be laid before the Christian public, with the hope of inducing some, who have the power, to aid in carrying it into effect.

As the service of women in the Church exists at present, it can only be undertaken by those who have a provision for their own support, either in their parents' houses, or otherwise. The labours of a large, industrious, well-educated, and influential class of women are excluded, from the fact of their having their own living to get; they are compelled to become teachers, daily or resident governesses, for which occupation perhaps they are totally unfit, at a salary of £30 or £40 a year, while their ministrations among the sick, the poor, and the criminal, for which perhaps they are thoroughly well qualified, are lost for the want of a paid female agency.

Neglected hamlets, as well as large towns, especially need such missionaries. Lying too far from the church, and too far from the school, to benefit much by either, no town hovel presents, at times, a greater picture of misery and degradation than a country cottage. The superior happiness of the poor of the rural districts is often imaginary; the thatched

roof covers many a scene of sorrow and wickedness, which we fancy is only beheld in the crowded alleys of a great city. The women, at work all day in the fields and on the farms, are often slatternly, improvident, and totally ignorant of domestic duties, perpetuating the same ignorance from one generation to another, as the little girls grow up to follow the habits of their mothers.

There is many a fair and pleasant spot in England where the few cottages comprising the village street, and clustered round the village Church, or scattered amidst the meadows and corn-fields near, teem with health, comfort, and rural plenty; to which the neighbouring rectory and country seat, supply the wisest of teachers, and the kindest of friends, where squalid poverty is unknown, except as the result of vice and idleness. But it is not always so. In some villages there is no help for the poor; in some, their wants have out-grown that help.

It will be our object to depict, in these stories, such scenes from the domestic life of the poor and working classes, as shall shew their trials and difficulties, their sorrows and joys, their wants and feelings; real scenes which have been, and are passing amongst us, and which, being real, afford useful lessons to all who sympathise with their humbler brethren, and desire to help them. In the pictures of village life, we particularly desire to demonstrate the need there is of village missions, and the large unoccupied field which they offer to women's labour.

The women need to learn domestic economy. The in-door occupations, which employed the English housewife in former days, have been discontinued with the altered state of society, and nothing tending to cottage economy, or cottage comfort, has been substituted for them. The art of spinning, weaving, knitting, have left the cottage; everything is bought. Even vegetable food, in some places, has fallen into disuse from the woman's want of skill in cooking it, owing to her long habit of feeding her family only on the things bought at the village shops. Then come all the miseries, and all the losses of constant dealings at the village shop, where every article costs one-fourth as much again as it ought; some, such as blankets, are double the price of a wholesale shop in London. This indeed is not an evil confined to country districts. Let any person go into the small poor shops of a low neighbourhood; he will probably find a *large increase* in the price of every article.

In village districts also, help is greatly needed in sickness. In illness, there is no hospital; often there is no workhouse infirmary near, to which the sufferer can be removed. The wives and daughters of the country clergy are often indefatigable in their labours; but there is much they cannot do, and more especially, in the case of outlying hamlets, miles distant perhaps from their own residence. There is many an over worked village matron, with a large family, who would be as glad of such a helper, as the overworked

clergyman of the assistant curate, granted by the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

Among villages also, the opportunities of instruction are far more restricted, the amusements quite as debasing, as those of the town population; for instance, the "Mops" and "Village Fairs;" and certainly ignorance is often carried to the highest conceivable pitch in a Christian country. If any one wishes for facts to verify these statements, let him refer to the "Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners on the employment of women and children in agriculture." We believe that no towns, not even the darkest parts of our great metropolis, can afford cases of grosser ignorance, as to spiritual things, than country villages. How should it be otherwise, when, in many, there is neither Sunday school, district visiting, cottage lectures, mothers' meetings, nor any such means whatever for benefiting the poor; where the sole means of religious instruction is a short afternoon sermon in the Church, or schoolroom; and where the only other place in which the people ever meet together for social intercourse, is the public house.

Neither are the cases of misery and friendless destitution, which shock us in the records of the London alleys, unfrequent in village life. Some twenty years ago, a woman, with an infant in her arms, stopped at the door of a labouring man's cottage, and asked permission to leave her baby for a little while. "She was so *very* tired," she said, and she had to go further, and would call for it as she came back to

Stanstead, The man's wife consented, the baby was left, but the woman never returned. The baby was taken to the Union, where it grew up a motherless, fatherless, homeless, friendless girl. As soon as it was possible that she could earn her own living, she was turned out to do so, as a farm servant; and uncared for, uncontrolled, in a few short years, closed her sad life with a shameful death, being hung for the murder of her own child. Can the London Refuge or Reformatory supply many cases more sad than this?

The inmates of the lone farm-house particularly need Christian instruction, especially the farm-servants; their opportunities of going to church are small, and their capacity for understanding what they hear there, is still smaller.

We subjoin an extract from a small monthly periodical, *The Coral Missionary Magazine*,* upon the subject of Village Missions:—

"We, English women, have been slow to learn, and slower still to claim our privileges as helpers in the Church of Christ. We *have* some very great privileges; we may boldly say, that the education of mankind is in a great measure committed to us, by the providence of the Lord; for those women whom He has not made mothers, He has made, at least the majority of them, nurses or teachers. There is no boy who, for the first ten or twelve years of his life, at any rate, is not under the almost exclusive influence of a woman; and in the case of a girl, the influ-

* Nisbet & Co.

ence lasts still longer, generally till she is eighteen or twenty. A mother's influence, a mother's love is, of course, the strongest; but God has put into the heart of every woman, in some degree, the feelings of a mother, and this constitutes a good teacher. We therefore call upon those who are *not* mothers, as well as upon those who are, to let those feelings flow out upon the legitimate objects of a mother's forbearance, tenderness, and care, the poor, the neglected, and the miserable, wherever they may be found; we ask them especially to become village mothers, because there are so many poor, neglected, and miserable villages; in remote districts, in Wales, in poor rural parishes, extending perhaps over ten or twelve miles, where it is impossible that the wives and daughters of the country clergy, when such there be, can fulfil a woman's duty to all the poor around."

"Then comes the question, How? We hope we hear some women saying, 'How is this to be done?' Where are the funds to come from? Who are to be the workers, and how shall they work?"

"In the first place, with regard to the funds, we hold, with the Bishop of Durham,* that space ought to be considered as in some respects equivalent to population, *i.e.*, that a large, poor, rambling parish, comprising perhaps two villages, and several outlying hamlets, where a small number of inhabitants are scattered over a wide extent of country, is often as

* See Episcopal Charge of the Bishop of Durham, when Bishop of Carlisle, for 1858.

much in need of help, as a densely populated town district. 'Nay,' argues the Bishop, 'even more, because the town clergyman has a great number of people to help him, the country clergyman perhaps not one.' Again, remote villages are often the last places to which the light penetrates—places in which, even in these days of the Bible and home missions, we are still told, people are better and more religious for not knowing how to read—'Dead Men's Villages,' they may aptly be called. In old country towns also, which we would desire to include in our mission, the chilling gloom, which overspread the Church in former days, has not yet passed away. These causes, and others such as these, often render it impossible for rural, or country town districts, to supply the needful help for the poor of the same. But we are all *one;* as the country has helped London, so now London, we are sure, will help the country. 'There is no part of the country,' say the Reports of the London City Mission, justly urging its claims upon country friends, 'which has not its representatives in London; no part of the country which does not contribute to swell the amount of London crime, and London misery.' 'If we refused,' says the Report of the Rescue Society, pleading the same cause, *i.e*, the claims of London upon the country, 'applicants, because they did not belong to London, we should have rejected no less than 392 during the past year (1860).' In like manner, the villages may justly say, 'By our industry your mar-

kets are supplied; it is we who send you domestic servants, shopmen, mechanics, artisans. If they came to London better prepared to meet the temptations of that huge town, less weak in moral principle, less ignorant of religious truth, they might leaven the masses more often for good, and swell less often the amount of evil.'"

"We come now to the more important question, Who are to be the workers, and how are they to work? We would not wholly exclude from our plan the good offices of the Scripture reader, for we know of villages where a shower of blessing, has begun to fall upon the labours of such. A plan has been suggested to us, with regard to country districts, which we think very excellent, and capable of great extension; it is that of itinerating missionaries in country places. It often happens there is not sufficient employment for a missionary all the year round, nor sufficient funds to support him, yet there are certain seasons, varying in different places, when his services would be very valuable; sometimes in hop seasons, when large numbers of persons are congregated from different neighhourhoods; sometimes at the season of 'Mops,' or village fairs. It is not even necessary, in these days of cheap and easy locomotion, that the places should be very near together. If any of our friends amongst the Christian community are willing to co-operate in this plan, we shall be glad to help them; ours is essentially a *helping fund.*"

"But our principal object is, women's work in the

Church. We wish we could say, with regard to country districts, 'Open the door, to the numbers of educated women who are longing for employment, but who are excluded by the fact of having to get their own living. Give them some hope of a place in a household, as well as to those whose time, from superior advantages of birth and fortune, is their own.' We trust the day will come when this will be possible, not only in village missions, but in every other office in which women's work is needed. But we must make a more humble beginning, and follow on the track which has been so honoured with success—the Bible women. We think that the missionary must be a sort of female Scripture reader of the humbler class, doing a woman's duty instead of a man's. If, therefore, in any neglected hamlet, in the neighbourhood of any mining or fishing village, where there is a larger work than usual to be done; hop gardens, or country districts in which there are mills or factories; or close by some dirty, wretched alley in a country town;—there should be any Christian woman willing and able to superintend such a work, we should be willing to assist in providing the funds, by the publication of such details as might interest friends at a distance, as might roll back the tide of sympathy with the poor and labouring classes from London to the country—to return, we trust, with an increased flow of interest, love, help, and pity, to the London alley. We should also be willing to assist in finding the workers, as in

remote country districts, such a task might be difficult of execution. Only let all things be done as unto the Lord—all secular objects be secondary to spiritual ones; the second commandment *following* the first, *but not* taking the place of it—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;' and then—'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'"

Another subject to which we desire to draw the attention of our readers, in introducing them to the homes of the labouring classes, is the warm affection to be found there. We have heard it confidently asserted, that the poor have not the same tender emotions as ourselves. We trust that in the instances given of love and duty in lowly places—such as "Tom the Thresher, or the Loving Son," the "Faithful Wife," "My Kitty," &c.—all true, all taken from real life, now passing amongst us—we have shewn, that though the discipline of life often compels the poor to make a sacrifice of their feelings, yet, for the sake of those they love, they are capable of a devotion and a self-denial which the richer classes, have seldom either the opportunity or the power to practise.

With regard to Refuges, we would remind our readers that the Refuge, represents prudent measures taken for preventing a house from being set on fire; the Reformatory, the act of extinguishing the flames. The refuge is the "Watchman;" the reformatory, the "Fire-brigade."

Notwithstanding this, the reformatories outnumber the refuges. We believe it is easier to provide for a criminal child than for one simply destitute. Relieving parents from the responsibility of taking care of their children, would be a great evil to introduce into any state; at the same time, the condition of destitute children, is a nursery-ground of crime. The wisest efforts in this direction, perhaps, would be a better system in regard to workhouse nurseries and schools. The case of sick children, who are without a home, is very sad; and also that of children who, from any cause, are disqualified for the ordinary prospects of a labouring life. That there still exists a great want to be supplied among refuges, we think the following story will shew:—

A little while ago there were two sick women lying, apparently in a dying state, very near to one another—the lady, in a large house in a square; the poor woman, in a small house in a little street, at the back. We will give the account in the lady's own words. The poor woman's son, William, was errand-boy, knife-cleaner, &c., at the large house.

"Almost every morning when William came, I used to ask how his mother was; week after week, the answer was 'Much the same,' 'No better,' 'She could not eat,' 'She could not sleep,' 'All the children slept in her room, it was hot,' &c. I knew she had been a hard-working, industrious, good wife, to a drunken husband; every now and then he used to take the pledge, but only to break it again. When

he was sober, he was kind enough, I believe. I never was able to go and judge for myself of the family; the woman I had never seen, nor even our errand-boy; I was too ill. When the husband was drunk, he would come in, and say to his wife, 'What, ain't you dead yet? I expected you to have been laid out by this time!' All our maids praised the wife, said how tidy she always kept her child when she was able to go about, what nice clean aprons, &c., William used to bring every week, and how hard she had worked for her family—too hard; she had hurt herself by it. I sent Emily to visit the sick mother, who brought me word that, besides William, there were two pretty little girls, one almost thirteen, and another, a poor, wee cripple, about six. Concerning this latter the mother's heart was greatly troubled, as she drew near to death. Emily continued to visit her; '*Must* you go?' she would say; and an expression of uneasiness would pass over her countenance, but no word betraying her husband's unkindness ever escaped her lips. In wakeful hours at night, I used to think of my suffering neighbour. By degrees, I learnt that she was a truly Christian woman; and this, if it lessened my pity for her, increased my sympathy. I therefore sent her word to lay aside all anxiety, if possible, about her little cripple, that there was an institution called the 'Cripples' Home,' where she could be received for £8 per annum, and I would engage she should be provided for there, the father to pay a portion of the

expense, which he agreed to do. The mother was much comforted by this promise; and after lingering a few weeks longer, she died a happy, though painful, death in the Lord. I then applied to the 'Cripple's Home' to receive the child; but was told she would not be eligible for four or five years on account of her age. However, I thought there were several other places where, by paying for her, the child would be received. 'Homes,' 'Orphanages,' 'Schools,' 'Institutions,' of all kinds, were tried in vain. For one she was too ill; for another she was not ill enough; one rejected her on account of her age; another, because she was lame; another, because she had a father living, &c. I was offered two places, where I was told ladies would be willing to receive her; but knowing they belonged to a party in the Church with whom I could not sympathise, I, with a grateful sense of such charitable intentions, of course, refused. Meantime, the father sold off all his furniture—beds, tables, chairs, &c.—to his landlord, drank up the whole of the money, and absconded. Only two alternatives were left to me: to send the little thing to the workhouse, or to place her out to nurse for six shillings a-week. I chose the latter, and put her with a kind Christian woman who had known her mother, and promised to care for her, and nurse her, and bring her up, while she remained with her, in the faith of her own, dear, lost parent. But I have only subscriptions for her to the amount of ten guineas per annum, and perhaps

another ten shillings; and in addition to the six shillings per week, I shall have to find her clothes, schooling, &c. Such is the story of my difficulties with little Annie!"

Our last subject is, the Sins of the Day. "One half of the world does not know how the other half lives." A great truth this; moreover, it is the foundation of a large portion of those gigantic evils, which still overshadow our national domestic life. It is, or was, a law of our Indian empire, that if a European judge, or assistant judge, sentence a native to receive a punishment, he, the European, shall be present at the administration of the same. Could we witness every degree of suffering inflicted upon others, by our injustice or want of consideration, we should shrink, at all events the religious and conscientious amongst us would, from those actions, or that course of life, which brings about such a result. We should not then clear away whole streets of poor houses, to make room for the dwellings of the comparatively rich; we should not leave the aged and honest poor to die in a workhouse ward, nor sentence children of tender age to prison for begging and sleeping in an outhouse; neither should we perpetrate those multifarious offences in common life, the consequences of which press so heavily on those beneath us. Itis, in a great measure, because "one half of the world does not know," nor desire, nor care to know, "how the other half lives," that the poorer half lives so miserably.

Labour must involve some degree of self-denial, and frequently some degree of suffering; few trades or occupations can be carried on without. We must not expect that suffering should cease; but we may, and ought to expect, yea, heartily to strive, that the vast amount of suffering which exists at present amongst the working-classes should be alleviated; we may, and ought, to learn sympathy and consideration for them. We particularly commend to our readers the condition of the aged poor; little is done for the succour of old age, and the alleviation of its sorrows. There was a case in the paper, not very long ago (October 1860), of a man one hundred years of age, who applied to the magistrates for an order of admission to a workhouse. We think that for the honest, deserving, and industrious poor, when deprived of all means of support, there ought to be Rest-Houses. Such might be founded in the following manner:—The usual parish allowance to an aged man or woman is two shillings and sixpence per week. If the authorities would contribute this, and *allow a small amount to be added by voluntary contributions*, the aged poor might be received into small houses, under the care of suitable persons. We think it hard to condemn such persons as those we have named in the stories of the "Hot Potato Woman," "Waiting to die," and "Darby and Joan," to the forlorn fireside of the aged ward of the union.

We believe that every one cause of the misery of our fellow-creatures, pointed out in these pages under

the head of Sins of the Day, is remediable, and being so, ought to be remedied. There are few things against which we more require to be on our guard than *conventional sins;* that degree of wrong-doing which we have been familiarised with from our infancy, and which being, by common consent, allowed as lawful amongst men, we have never tested by the laws of justice and mercy—in short, by the laws of God.

Village Life and Village Missions.

CHAPTER I.

HOME LIFE IN THE COTTAGE.

IT was a lovely summer's night in the woods of Elsderly. Those grand old woods! Their leafy depths and sheltered paths seemed as though they had come down to us unchanged from the days of the old English barons. The setting sun illumined the western boughs like a forest fire; and the cuckoo, a late visitor in a cold, wet summer, was shouting forth the last of his merry little notes before starting on his continental tour.

There had been a happy party in the woods that day; all the long hours, from "morn till dewy eve," had been spent under the shadows of the trees, notwithstanding a few coolish sprinkles of rain, the usual greetings of English skies. And now, before the gipsy kettle was boiled for tea, it was proposed to adjourn to the house of an old servant, which stood with a few others in a small open space.

We, accustomed to the close dirty streets of a town, had often looked with admiration at the picturesque

cottages and the pretty gardens of the villagers, and secretly wondered that all poor people did not live in the country. But oh, the cottage in the woods! Oh, the bed-room! The stifling heat, the absence of air and light, the high-peaked roof immediately under the thatch, the one small, low window, almost even with the floor, soon convinced us, that though nasturtiums and monthly roses might look well outside of a cottage, there was evil in poverty, in the country as well as in the town, and especially that kind of evil which is brought about by means of ill-ventilated, crowded dwellings.

If we look, as we pass through the country districts, at the dwellings of the poor, not with regard to their external appearance—the honeysuckle climbing over the thatch, or the rose peeping in at the window—but with regard to the size, the number of rooms they may be supposed to contain, the degree of ventilation afforded by the windows, the possible accommodation for a labourer, his wife, and family, we shall find them, in many instances, most lamentably wanting. If this were a deficiency of comfort only, it would be very sad; but, when we add that the character of the inhabitants of each particular district, bears no small relation to the fitness or unfitness of the dwellings in which they have been brought up, it is more than sad, it is deplorable.

Let us call up the picture of some of these rural abodes. *There* is a row facing the village street, through the midst of which runs an open gutter. Two

or three narrow passages lead from the street to the back of the houses, where the ground rises in a little hill; about three yards up the hill stand the pig-sties, &c., and small pools of filth and dirt are seen here and there; when these overflow, all the mass runs through the little passages into the street. The cottages are therefore constantly surrounded by running streams of filth. It has since happened, that a malignant typhus has raged on the spot; we trust it proved a messenger to awaken those whose business it was, no longer to neglect the work of reformation.

Let us take another cottage scene; it is another case of the presence of the same frightful village guest, malignant typhus. "There was one cottage," says the medical man, "which I attended, which consisted of one room on the ground floor, and two small bed-rooms up stairs. In this cottage lived an old man, with his wife, his two daughters, middle-aged women, and his son and wife, with their children—in all, ten individuals. The whole family had the fever, some of them very severely. The son's wife, with two of her children, were on a bed in an out-house. In the out-house was a well, and a large tub containing pigs' victuals, which was the general receptacle for every thing. The floor was of earth, there was no ceiling but the thatch of the roof. In the same village there were more than forty cases of typhus." "At a village in Dorsetshire," says another gentleman, "I measured a bed-room in a cottage consisting of two-rooms; the bed-room in question was up stairs, and there was a room on

the ground floor in which the family lived during the day. They were eleven in the family; and the aggregate earnings in money were 16s. 6d. weekly, with certain advantages, the principal being the father's title to a grist of a bushel of corn a week, at one shilling below the market price, his fuel carted for him, &c. The bedroom was ten feet square, and not reckoning the two small recesses by the sides of the chimney, about eighteen inches deep. The roof was the thatch, the middle of the chambers being about seven feet high. Opposite the fire-place was a small window about fifteen inches square, the only one to the room." In this room slept eleven persons, including the children! "This," continues the same gentleman, "I was told, was not an extraordinary case; but that, more or less, every bedroom in the village was crowded with inmates, and that such a state of things was caused by the want of cottages."*

Do you say, kind reader, touched with pity and indignation, "Oh! but in our village it is not so." We trust it is not. Amongst English villages there are, doubtless, many fair and pleasant exceptions, but before you confidentially answer the question, go and inspect the sleeping rooms in a labourer's cottage. Do not take your idea of the comfort of the cottage from

* See report of the Special Poor Law Commissioners for the counties of Wilts, Dorset, Devon, and Somerset, for 1843. We fear there has not been much reformation; we know a village in which, not very long ago, a fever prevailed, caused, the medical man said, by a communication between the pig-sties and wells.

the clean bricked kitchen, with a door close to the garden, made bright and cheerful by housewifely hands; but see the bedrooms, the beds, ask how many sleep in each room, how many in each bed.

If such are sometimes the habitations of the village labourers, what is their food? A few vegetables grow in the little garden, and then there is the pig-sty and the pig. Plenty of pork and bacon makes a comfortable meal; so it does; but sometimes the cottagers cannot afford to kill and eat their own pigs; only those who are tolerably well-to-do in the world can do this. Sometimes piggy is destined for one use, sometimes for another; sometimes he finds the family in clothes, sometimes he pays the shoe-bill. We remember one story of this kind, when the pig, brought up and educated for this purpose, died, and left the shoe-bill unpaid. "We never," said a woman, the wife of a farm-labourer in Wiltshire, "see such a thing as butcher's meat; our food is principally potatoes, with bread. We eat about six gallons of bread a week. Sometimes, when butter is cheap, we buy half a pound a week, but most frequently fat, which we use with the potatoes to give them a flavour. Our neighbour, the clergyman, gives us a little milk. We lay out 2½d. a-week in tea, chiefly to let my husband have a comfortable breakfast on the Sunday, the only day he breakfasts at home, and it is the only thing I indulge in; our common drink is burnt crust tea. We also buy about half a pound of sugar a week. We never know what it is to get enough to eat; at the

end of the meal, the children would always eat more. Of bread there is never enough, the children are always asking for more at every meal. I then say, 'You don't want your father to go to prison, do you?'"

"The want of food among the poor," says a physician, speaking of a village population, "produces various diseases of the stomach, then general debility, liability to fever, slow and difficult recovery from any disease, and a smaller proportion of recoveries. Where there is a family, potatoes do and must necessarily form the principal food. Where there are not more than two or three children, a little bacon may be bought; but as the wages are only eight shillings a week in some places, unless a man has an allotment, he will not be able to buy much bacon, even if he has only two children. I calculated that in my own family each individual consumes a shilling's worth of bread every week, besides animal food, &c. Apply this rule, if it be one, to the poor man's family, and there is little left for anything more than bread. Fresh butcher's meat is never bought. The entrails or 'inards,' as they are called, of the numerous swine killed here, form the chief luxury of those who can afford something better than bread and potatoes. The children do not appear to suffer directly so much as their parents, whether it is their young stomachs digest the food better, or that the parents stint themselves for the sake of the children." *

* See Report of the Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioner *for the Counties* of Wilts, Dorset, Devon, and Somerset, for 1843.

This is one sweet spot to look upon in the midst of so much sorrow; the father, the mother, working hard, suffering much, yet stinting themselves of their daily meal that their children may be satisfied. Another great evil with regard to food, which prevailed some years ago in the western counties, is, that the farmers pay their labourers' wages partly in cider—all the labourers, men, women, and boys. A man has three or four pints of cider a-day, which is reckoned to him as from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per week! Every farm in cider counties has an orchard; the best cider is sent to London or elsewhere. The strong and rough inferior sort is drunk by the farmer's family, or sold to his labourers. The women are paid half the quantity of cider that the men have. Sometimes they drink it themselves, but more frequently they keep it for their husbands.* But the worst effects of this system are seen in the boys. From seven, eight, or nine years old, a child is accustomed to drink a pint, or a pint and a half of strong rough cider a day; the boy is thus taught to drink from his earliest age, and habit so confirms the evil, that he rarely conquers it all his life long.

A woman's wages for field labour are, in some places half, and in some places less than half, those of

* A Devonshire woman once told us that it was reckoned shameful in her country for women to drink anything stronger than water. In harvest time, it is usual to send tea, coffee, and milk and water out into the fields, for the use of the women; a praiseworthy custom, deserving of being more generally introduced.

man; however hard she may labour, she yet only gains half of what he does. A woman can earn from eightpence to tenpence per diem. It must be recollected that she has to find her own food. Her labour consists in stone picking, at one penny for two barrows' full, apple-picking, potato-digging, clover-picking, turnip-hoeing, haymaking, harvesting. To these are sometimes added, in the case of girls employed on a farm, "driving bullocks to field and fetching them in again, cleaning out their houses and bedding them up, washing potatoes, and boiling them for pigs, milking in the fields, leading horses or bullocks to plough, in mixing lime and earth to spread on the fields, digging potatoes, digging and pulling turnips, and any thing that comes to hand, like a boy; they reap a little, not much, load pack horses, go out with horses for furze," &c.

Sometimes a woman will say that she thinks potato digging the hardest work, sometimes haymaking, sometimes gleaning or leasing, as it is also called. For her sevenpence or eightpence she is expected to work nine or ten hours a day, in wet, and cold, and wind, and sun; of course it not unfrequently happens that a woman, on returning home from work, is obliged to go to bed for an hour or two, to allow her clothes to be dried; if she does not do this, she puts them on again sometimes nearly as wet as when she took them off. She may, however, have a Sunday gown notwithstanding.

A day's gleaning may perhaps seem a pleasant

occupation to our readers. What do they think of the following account?

"I went out leasing this autumn for three weeks, and was very brisk: I got six bushels of corn. I got up at two o'clock in the morning, and got home at seven at night. My girls, aged ten, fifteen, and eighteen, went with me. We leased in the neighbourhood, and sometimes as far as seven miles off. I have been accustomed to work in the fields at haytime and harvest. Sometimes I have had my mother, and sometimes my sisters, to take care of the children, or I could not have gone out. I have gone to work at seven in the morning, till six in the evening, in harvest,—sometimes much later, but it depends on circumstances. Women with families cannot be ready so soon as the men, and must be home earlier, and therefore they don't work so many hours. In making hay I have been strained with the work; I have felt it sometimes for weeks, so bad sometimes I could not get out of my chair. In leasing, in bringing home the corn, I have hurt my head, and have been deaf by it. Often out of the fields myself and my children have come home with our things quite wet through. I have gone to bed for an hour, for my things to get a little dry, but have had to put them on again even then, quite wet. I generally had tenpence a day; sometimes as much as a shilling a day. We pay £7 a year rent for our cottage and large garden. There are three rooms in the cottage;—two bed-rooms, in which we have three beds, and we find great difficulty in slee

ing our family. When we wash our sheets, we must have them dry again by night. In the garden we raise plenty of potatoes; we have about a shilling's worth of meat a-week; a pig's milt sometimes; a pound or three quarters of a pound of suet; seven gallons of bread a week; sometimes a little pudding on Sundays. I can cook a little."

Notwithstanding, however, some occasional distress from excessive labour, it is a fact, that field work rather conduces to the health than otherwise. The fresh, free air of heaven, which God created for man, has that beneficial effect upon the constitution, that few people suffer much or long from out-of-door work. A day's washing in a wet wash-house, is often as likely to induce rheumatism as a day's turnip-hoeing in the winter's rain. Yet the consequences of field labour are often very injurious to women. It takes away from the propriety of their character as women, and assimilates them in character, as in occupation, to the men. It is also most disastrous in its effect upon the family. The husband is neglected, the children unminded, nearly all the duties which God has appointed to the wife and the mother are left unfulfilled.

The woman who works constantly in the fields *cannot* fulfil her *home* duties; and those occupations which take a woman from her family, take her from fulfilling the ordinances of God; and we doubt whether anything which is gained in wages can, or ever does, make up for the evil. If a woman works the whole of her working hours, from seven in the morning till

five in the evening, perhaps her wages do not amount to much more than one-third those of a man. "The cottage," says a rector of a country parish, whence the woman is constantly absent, "becomes only a covert or den of nightly shelter, to which the poor resort, only to rush forth again with their children in the morning in search of food; all those feelings which are associated with the expressive English name of 'Home,' are destroyed."

The husband may come home tired and wet; but his wife, more tired and wet perhaps than himself, has only been a short time in her cottage. She *must* see to her children, she *must* give them something to eat, and put them to bed. The husband goes off to the ale-house; there is no fire for him at home, no supper, no comfort. Her own clothes, her husband's, her children's, must all be unmended.

If the children are left to take care of themselves, serious accidents often happen; sometimes they scald themselves, or injure themselves by severe falls. If a girl is hired to take care of the children, her wages, and the expense of keeping her, make a large deduction from the mother's earnings. "I have always left my children to themselves," says one poor labouring woman, "and, God be praised, nothing has ever happened to them, though I have thought it dangerous. I have many a time come home, and have thought it a mercy to find nothing *has* happened to them. It would be much better if mothers could be at home; but they must work. Bad accidents often

happen." "I do not think," says another, "a great deal is got by a mother of a family going out to work; perhaps she has to hire a girl to look after the children, and there is a great waste of victuals and spoiling of things, and then working in the fields makes people *eat so much more.* I know it was so with me always. I often said there is not fourpence got in the year by working out."

There is scarcely a class among the working poor in England at the present time, concerning whose manner of life, privations, sorrows, and temptations, less is known than that of the rural labourers; and, consequently, for whom less sympathy is felt. Our city and town missions, our reformatory and refuge unions, have revealed the secrets of street life, the degradations of town lodging-houses; but we need still, as we have observed in the preceding chapter, a village mission, to bring to light those which hide themselves under the thatched roof of the village dwelling.

CHAPTER II.

BOYS AND GIRLS AT WORK IN THE FIELDS.

THE summer twilight is just beginning to steal over the harvest field, and long have some little eyes been peering into the heavens, to catch sight of the first star. So soon as it is seen, father will leave off reaping, take up his sickle, and go home. There! there it is! There is the first star; now the day's work of the reaper is ended. He is tired; the children probably have also been at work all day, and they are tired too; but now, according to the custom in some of the counties of England, with the first star seen from the harvest field, the toils of the day are ended.

We have said the children have probably been at work all day. The little cottager begins to labour almost as soon as his hands are able to perform the task. He sees the scythe and the reaping-hook hanging up in his father's house, and he longs as much to use them, as a young gentleman longs to take down papa's gun, or a little lady to possess herself of mama's needle.

How soon, then, do the toils of the peasant child commence? Sometimes at six years' old, often at eight or nine. His first occupation is scaring birds from the newly-sown corn. This, of course, is generally in the early spring; he goes to work as soon as it is light, and stays all alone in the fields until six in the evening. He does not go home to dinner, he carries his dinner with him; if it is a cloudy, rainy day, he makes himself a sort of hut in the hedge, where the twigs, meeting over his head, give him some shelter from the wet, while he eats his meal. But the crow-scarer must not mind the rain, however heavily it may pour down; he must go from field to field, to look after his feathered friends, who may be taking their dinner also, and perhaps he may have three, four, or five fields in his care. Sunday comes, but the crow-scarer never goes to church, nor to the Sunday school; he must watch the fields the same as on any other day. For all this work, his wages are eighteenpence or two shillings per week.

When the small labourer is eight years old, he begins to thresh in the barn, and now his wages are raised to fivepence a day. His hours of work are "daylight." He must have had his breakfast, and be at work by six, and he leaves off at dusk. In the long days, when the daylight lasts more than twelve hours, his hours of work are from six to six. When the dark mornings of winter set in, and Christmas comes with frost and snow, and February and March *with their dull* and stormy skies, then the boy-labourer

goes into the woods to work at wood-chopping, sometimes with his father, sometimes hired to assist some other man. At this occupation his wages are raised again, and for wood-chopping, he receives three shillings per week.

Now, our hero is advanced to the age of twelve, and is occupied at potato-digging and turnip-pulling; his wages are also advanced twopence: he gets sevenpence a day. His work at potato-digging is to follow his father, or the man by whom he is hired, picking up the potatoes as the man digs; at turnip-pulling, he works with his mother, pulling the turnips out of the ground, which is very hard work; or, sometimes, he is employed in the sheep-fold, cutting, picking, and carrying turnips for the sheep to eat: for this he gets sixpence a day; or, from spring to harvest, he weeds the corn. Sometimes he picks the thistles off the grass land, or the stones off the clover fields. Then comes the harvest time; and if our young labourer has reached the age of twelve or thirteen, he may get as much as one shilling a day, his work in the field being to make bands for the men who bind the corn, and to help in stacking it.

"I am twelve years old," says one of our friends, "I have been four years at work under one master. I was paid fivepence a day at first; I am now paid sevenpence. I work from seven to five o'clock, and breakfast before I go. I work now at hop-digging. [illegible] I sprained my wrist; I can move my wrist [illegible] have never hurt myself before at work in

the hop gardens, but in the summer I sprained my thumb at "swapping." I used to be very tired when I first went to work. Driving the horse at harrow is harder work than driving the horse at plough;—driving the horse at plough makes one's legs ache; driving at harrow *makes one's legs ache more.* Hop-digging is a good deal harder than harrowing; it tries the back. My brother has also sprained his wrist at hop-digging; he is eleven years old. One can go on working after one has sprained the wrist, if one ties it up, but then one keeps catching of it often;—I mean, that it gives sudden pains. At swapping I used to work from light to dark, but hop-digging is harder than swapping. Many boys of my age dig hops. I have now three meals and a bait while I am digging. I have meat about once in the week,—I mean mutton by meat; I have bacon once a day. I have five brothers and four sisters. I have a clean shirt once a week. Once in two or three years I have a new pair of leather gaiters, and once in three or four years a new jacket. I have had the ague for the last year, but have now got the better of it. I go to school on Sunday. I went to school at an old woman's for a year before I went to work. We paid threepence a week. I cannot write. I can read a little."

It is not, however, only the little boys who work in the field; the cottage girls take also their share in the task. As soon as a girl is nine years old, she is set to work. From eight o'clock in the morning till five in the evening, are the hours of labour.

When the little maiden is ten, she is employed in the harvest-field; and at thirteen, she takes her place among the hay-makers. In some counties, a girl of twelve is employed in reaping and couching; which means, picking the strong couch-grass out of the corn. Pulling turnips is the hardest work. "My children's hands," says a poor woman, "are so blistered pulling the turnips, that I've been obliged to tie them up every night this winter. Pulling turnips blisters the hands very much; they're obliged to pull them up; they must not use turnip-crows,* for fear of damaging the turnips." Sometimes, too, the girls are employed in tending sheep, especially when the snow is on the ground.

Here, then, are two pictures for our contemplation. The little crow-scarer, whose hours of work are "daylight," sitting in his dining-room, a dry nook under the shelter of a hedge; and the little cottage maiden, whose daily task is pulling turnips and tending sheep in the snow. And why should not these things be? Why should not a tiny boy of six be a crow-scarer? or the little maiden tend the sheep in the snow? We honour honest labour. The crow-scarer, who does his work faithfully, and brings home his two shillings a week towards the family earnings, is a little person much to be respected. He is happy, too, and healthy; useful labour brings happiness, and the fresh, open air of heaven brings health; but all the good things of this world are good only in moderation. As it

* A sort of fork.

would destroy a child's mental health always to be kept at mental work, without bodily exercise, so it destroys a child's mental health always to be kept at bodily labour without mental exercise. What is the result of the early age at which a boy is set to work in the fields? It deprives him of all the advantages of the commonest education. He cannot read; he has never had time to learn. What he learns in the few weeks during which he may perhaps go to school in the summer—for if he does go to school at all, it is generally in the summer, not in the winter—he soon forgets, if, indeed, he ever understands it; if, indeed, his amount of knowledge is not about equal to that once elicited from a Sunday school child in a Sussex village. "You go to the Sunday school?" "Yes." "What do you read?" "We read up one page, and down another." "But what book do you read—do you read the Bible?" "Yes." "And what part of the Bible?" "We read St Matthew." "And whom do you read about in St Matthew?" A long pause; the questioner becomes impatient—"Do you read about Samuel?" "Yes, we read about Samuel." Or this, from a candidate for admission to a Sunday school:—"What is your name?" "Susan." "Susan what?" No answer. "I mean your father's name?" "Father's name is 'Father.'" "What *is* your father then, child?" A pause. "What does he do?" "Father never does no harm!"

The child grows up to a man, and we call him a *clod-hopper*; he knows nothing beyond the clods of

the earth; how should he? he knows nothing about his own soul. At church he goes to sleep; as to the sermon, he does not understand a word of it; never having been accustomed to any reasoning process as a child, he cannot understand it as a man. Is this ignorance unavoidable? Far from it. We read in some reports of the degree of education which can be bestowed upon children under the age of six. In this we have not much confidence; but ten or eleven is surely early enough for a boy to begin labour, which would leave a few years of childhood available for the purposes of education. One schoolmaster, in his evidence before the commissioners, states, "A boy coming to school at six, and leaving at ten, if he attends regularly, would be able to read, write, cipher, know a little geography, a little grammar, and possibly some drawing and music." "I heard," says the gentleman who makes a report concerning this school, "three lads of different ages, the eldest about eleven, the youngest about nine, answer admirably in geography and arithmetic, and parse fairly." Without imagining that all boys of ten or eleven years old could make this progress, we yet think that in schools where the instruction is really good, they might learn sufficient in these years to raise them from a state of ignorance and almost heathenism; and *certainly* they might, if it was combined with an attendance in after years at the Sunday school, and at an occasional winter-evening school. We say heathenism, for in some of the rural districts,

the children are not only brought up without the knowledge of reading and writing, or the arts of civilised life, but they are occasionally ignorant of the first principles of religion. They scarcely know that there is a God, or a heaven, or a hell hereafter. Perhaps it may be said that geography is not necessary for the poor; we fear the want of that knowledge has led to many a sad mistake in the matter of emigration. A lady had been long urging upon a poor family the advantages of emigrating to Australia; one day she was surprised by an inquiry from the mother to the following effect, "Oh, then, ma'am, we should be obliged to leave this town altogether?" In the northern counties of England, education is much more valued; there, it is a rare thing to find a labourer who cannot read and write, and keep his own accounts.

The children of the poor, however, do not object to this system; like all other children, they mistake their own interests; they do not know, and they do not wish to learn. We think, however, that the ploughman's son has a reason for preferring the fields to the school, which children of the better classes could not urge. "I had rather work than play," says one boy; "you can get most victuals when you work." "It is ever so long," says the same individual, "since I went to school; I left when I was about eight years old. I cannot read, I do not know the names of the months. I was twelve last Sunday; I work all the year round

when it is dry. I shim* in the hop-grounds; for this I get a penny an hour. Sometimes I thresh at the machine, and get ninepence a day; this goes on all night that it may not spoil, because the corn is in the fields; for the day and night I get eighteenpence. We then watch it for three nights, and turn it for three days, that it may get quite dry and hard. I have three meals a day; bread and cheese, or bread and butter, for breakfast; sometimes, but not often, bread and meat, or bread and potatoes, for dinner. We are eleven in all—five brothers and four sisters. We are badly off for clothes; there are not many so bad off as we are. I work on Sunday; the others do not often go to Church. I *once* went to school for a week."

As regards the girls, we think we may say that field work is wholly injurious to them. The boy is, at all events, learning his future occupation;—the girl is not. On the contrary, she is learning that which unfits her for her future occupation, which, as it has been aptly said, "uncivilises her." It would be difficult to over-estimate the advantages of a comfortable home to a poor man, and a girl inured to field labour is not likely to become a careful housewife, or an intelligent mother, able to train up her girls to be the same after her. What does a little girl require to learn to do at home? She requires to learn to clean the pots and kettles, light the fire, wash and iron clothes, mind the

* Shimming, *i. e.*, weeding. The shim is sometimes drawn by a horse led by a boy.

children, cook, scrub the floors and tables. Perhaps our readers may think these things are soon learnt;—that nothing is easier than to scrub a table, for instance, and that no one requires to learn how to do it. This is a great mistake. There is a right and a wrong way of scrubbing a table, and the wrong way does not answer nearly so well as the right.

We would earnestly press upon those who have the opportunity of carrying it into effect, the urgent need which exists of a different system of education for the daughters of the poor. It rarely happens that girls, brought up in a cottage or a hovel, understand much, under the best circumstances, of domestic duties. And why not? Because their mothers have never been taught themselves, and cannot teach them. The combining the education at present given to girls with industrial training, would tend very much to raise the condition of the poor. Girls are taught at school to hem and sew; but they are not taught, at least in many schools they are not, to cut out and place their own work; consequently their hemming and sewing is of little use. When they become women, they buy the clothes of the family at some miserable slop-shop. A poor woman, who might save greatly by making her children's clothes, is rarely seen with a needle in her hand. Often they are not taught even to mend stockings or to piece old clothes. These things no more come by nature than reading and writing do. Again, if a girl had an ordinarily good

knowledge of washing and ironing, and the plainest, commonest cooking, much money might be saved in labourer's families, and much additional comfort obtained. The needlework might certainly be taught in any school. The other acquirements it might be more difficult to impart; but difficulties are not impossibilities, and results, far more important than is generally believed, hang on these, so-called, small things.

With regard to the very early employment of children, we know there are many arguments which may be used in favour of it, but none, we think, sufficiently powerful, when the case is so extreme as seriously to affect their welfare when they become men and women. One argument is the great poverty of the parents, which renders the two or three shillings earned by each child a matter of consequence to the family and to the child himself, since the parents are obliged to feed and clothe him better when he works than when he is idle. If a boy, for instance, earns three shillings per week, only two shillings is gained by the family—the other shilling is spent on his extra food and clothing. These arguments apply equally to factory work, and yet it is thought needful to impose a check on its duration, and the age at which labour is commenced. That no such attention has been given to the work in the fields, arises probably from its not being injurious to bodily health; but there is a fact which ought always

to be borne in mind in the training of children, both among the rich and poor, that man is compounded both of body and spirit, and that the education of both is needful to form a human being at once intelligent, useful, and happy.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOP GARDEN.

THE English people are apt to think much of the beauty of the vine, and the vineyards of summer lands; but all travellers are agreed, that they are far surpassed by the English hop gardens. The excessive neatness, all the labour being performed by the hand of man, the delicate colour of the plant, its elegance of form, and the luxuriance of its growth, tend to render the hop garden one of the most attractive sights among the produce of the fields.

There, may be seen at work little family groups, of husband, wife, child — the husband does the rougher parts of the work, such as opening the hills,* *i. e.*, preparing the trenches for the seed, and fixing the poles in the ground; the wife hands the poles to her husband, and does the "clog-clearing," *i. e.*, picking up any chips or broken ends which may be

* In some places, in the neighbourhood of Maidstone, for instance, this hard work is performed by women.

strewn over the ground; and the boy digs. There is, however, one portion of the labour which can only be performed by women—tying the hops to the poles; "for a man," we are told, "it is an endless job; he can't get on at it." The hop must be kept facing the sun; if the weather is windy, and blows it aside, it must be tied again and again, to keep it in the right place. When the plant becomes tall, the woman mounts a ladder, and continues thus to tend and train it, until it grows beyond her reach. When the picking season comes, men, women, boys, and girls, are all employed. The labour is generally healthful; the fresh, open air does not bring on disease and death like the crowded factory. The gain is considerable; a woman can tend two acres and a half in a week, and she is paid nine shillings for an acre; "and," says a person commending this sort of labour, "as the poor have no public or social intercourse, the gay seasons of field labour—hay-making, harvesting, and hop-picking—stand in their stead." Let our readers pause for a moment, and think what a shadow this must be in the life of the poor—they have no social intercourse. We realise but little the picture of a poor man's life. "I'll come and drink tea with you," said a poor man to his friend in the street; but I'll bring my two penn'orth of tea along with me." So fond are the poor of hop-picking, that it is a great complaint of the farmers in the hop districts, that the servants leave their places in the hop season to join the labourers.

This is the bright side of the picture; but there are the shadows. All labour, especially excessive labour, whether of the head or the hand, must bring its degree of discomfort and suffering, as well as of advantage and blessing. In the case of the hop garden, some of these evils are necessarily connected with the occupation; others are avoidable, and ought to be remedied. Among the former we may mention, first, the wet seasons. Healthful and pleasant as the work in the hop gardens may be in fine weather, it is sickness and suffering in wet seasons; sometimes the hop-pickers stand upon boards to keep them from the damp ground, but often this precaution, like the miner's "Davy," is neglected. The hop must be picked directly it is ripe; it spoils sooner in wet weather than in fine; consequently, unless the rain is very excessive, the labour must be continued. Then fever, ague, rheumatism, influenza, and diarrhœa attack the poor labourers. Sometimes they will not work in the wet; but then they must all agree together to leave off; and as some hop gardens are very extensive, and afford employment to as many as three hundred people, with perhaps as many as forty and fifty at work in one field, this is sometimes difficult. If only a few do not like to expose themselves to the rain, and wish to go home, the tally-man encourages them to stay, by persuading them "*it is only the pride of the morning; it will be off by the time you get to the top of the field*, &c. If persuasions will not do, he resorts to another expedient;

he refuses to take the hops, and leaves the basket out in the rain ; the pickers lose twopence or threepence in this manner. The hops when picked are put into baskets, holding seven bushels each ; these baskets are called "frames," and are divided by bands of black paint into portions, each of which holds a bushel ; the hops are paid for, when picked, per bushel, according to their quality. If, when picked, they are exposed to the wet, they sink ; and thus the picker receives twopence or threepence less for the same quantity.

The second unavoidable evil is the work in the hop kiln. One man has to labour in the kiln every season, for a period varying from a fortnight to five weeks, day and night, Sundays excepted. The hops are strewn over a grating, or open floor, and require to be constantly turned. The floor is heated from below with charcoal and brimstone ; some air is allowed, otherwise, of course, the man could not exist, but the heat and smell are suffocating. Here the man remains day and night ; he never takes off his clothes, but lies down to sleep occasionally on a sack filled with chaff.

Thirdly, there is the rag-chopping, *i. e.*, cutting up rags to serve as manure for the hop-gardens in the winter. The wages for this are sevenpence per hundred weight ; a woman can cut two hundredweight in a day. If the work be done in the cottage, it must needs be very detrimental to the health of the inmates.

But by far the greatest evil which results from this kind of labour, is one, the effects of which might be

remedied, at any rate, to a great degree, by proper care and attention. This evil is the stream of "foreigners," as they are called, which pours upon a rural population in the picking season. The work is more than can be done by the ordinary labourers in the time required; it therefore attracts all sorts of people, from the respectable labourer of another county, down to the vagrant population of the London streets. Some come from Ireland; some are gipsies; of the English, some come from St Giles's, Saffron Hill, Whitechapel, and Kent Street. A respectable countryman once said of them, "The scrapings of the world are there." The villagers are thus compelled to associate with the vicious population of London and other places. In some parts, every cottager holds his dwelling upon condition of admitting hop-pickers for his landlord's plantations. The cottages are thus crowded with these strangers; all decency and order is interrupted, the villagers cease to attend church, the shops are open on Sundays, "for," say the shopkeepers, "order is so much disturbed that provisions can only be bought for a day, lest they should be lost, or made away with." Sometimes the "foreigners" are received into a sort of barracks erected for that purpose, where the evils are scarcely less. Generally, the crowd begins to collect a week or ten days before the hop-picking commences, during which time fences are destroyed, orchards and turnip-fields are robbed. One hop-producing district* contains

* Farnham.

about 7000 people; in the hop-picking season there arrive some thousands of strangers. "From want of work," says a labourer from Brockham, "I left my house locked up after last harvest, and went, with my wife and children, to the village of Hightham, between Sevenoaks and Maidstone, to help to gather hops in that country. We were away from home for one month; and, during our stay in Kent, we lodged at a hop-house. The hop-houses are built to receive those who come to pick hops from a distance, and cannot afford to hire lodgings. The house in which we lived for the time had no chimneys nor windows; we were provided with straw and hurdles, by which we fenced ourselves off from two other families in the same building. Some houses are much larger than those we lived in, and hold more families. There were at the hopping a great many from all parts. There was a very great deal of disorder going on in the evening, and on Sundays. There was a great deal of drinking, a great deal of bad language, and brawling, and fighting, and no care for Sunday. There were many worse companies than those which we were in." If these people were properly cared for, it might be that the "hopping season" would become a time of good for these unhappy "scrapings of the world," instead of a time of evil for those with whom they are brought into contact.

The night accommodation has probably as much to do with the illnesses contracted during the hopping *season, as the* exposure to the weather. Those who

resort thither from towns suffer the most. Sometimes, in such families, the children will be laid up with fever and ague for months after a hopping excursion. The women and children frequently go on these excursions without the father of the family. In addition to fever and ague in the wet years, scarcely a season passes without some case of small-pox appearing; and hooping-cough and measles are somewhat frequently communicated to the home dwellers.

Then there is the "Grand Sunday," as it is called. This is the second Sunday in the hopping season, and is equivalent to the Derby-day at the races. On that day, carts, coaches, vehicles of every description, may be seen proceeding to the neighbourhood of the hop gardens, crowded with people, principally young men and young women, from the neighbouring towns and villages, going to see "the hoppers." It may be imagined such a strange medley of people, their wretched looks, miserable garments, and free manner of life, attract the curiosity of the villagers; such an association cannot of course be productive of good; the public-houses are crowded, and drunkenness and vice of all descriptions is freely indulged in.

Are not these dark shadows over a sunny field of English rural labour? They who steadily fix their eyes upon them, will, we are sure, consider the hop-garden as a place where there are duties to the poor left undischarged, as well as the dens and alleys of London.

CHAPTER IV.

A PEEP AT THE MILL.

VERY quiet and secluded is the little village of Stanstead. With no railroad, a post but once a-day, unless, indeed, the postman happens to have no work, in which case he condescends to go a second time to the neighbouring town for letters, taking care always to carry any bearing the Canada post-mark to the lonely farm on the hill—no rich neighbours except the great Lord ——, too great to be "a neighbour" at all, except in name, Stanstead has escaped, or rather been debarred from, as our readers' prejudices may incline them to read it, many of the changes which have supervened between the beginning of the century, and the present time, A.D. 1860. One change, however, it has not escaped, —on the stream which runs past it, there stands a mill, or, perhaps, as we should rather call it, a factory.

There is many a pleasant cottage-home in Stanstead, in its blossoming gardens, or in the village

street; many a humble but comfortable farm-house on the opposite hill, and on the edge of the common; and often do the village girls, when out at service in towns and counties far away, take pleasure in talking of the little friendly community, where all know all, and all are friends, or at least acquaintances,—whom father walks to church with,—of the happy summer days, when half the village went to the Crystal Palace, &c., &c. From this sort of loving gossip, however, there is one class always excepted—the factory girls. "Mother would never let me speak to them." "Father would never let me go with them." Aunt says, "They're no good; what one doesn't know another teaches her." "They're no good." "They don't come to no good."

"They're no good! They don't come to no good!" This sounds so sadly when applied to a number of young creatures, standing on the threshold of life and womanhood, that it tempts the listener to continue the inquiry,—"How many girls work at the Mill?"

"About fifty—rather more."

"What is the work?"

"Well, in former times, they used to make gold lace for the soldiers' dress, that is, gold fringe, you know, for the epaulettes and things, but the soldiers don't wear that now."

"What do they make now?"

"Well, they make the lace for the soldiers' dresses —that is, the sort of binding, as you might have on your gown. The soldiers dress plain now." (The

lady listener wishes most ardently that her own sex would follow the example.)

"What else do the factory girls make?"

"Sewing silk, worsted, and wicks for the composite candles."

"What are the hours of work?"

"From six to six—it used to be much longer. I've heard my father say, the girls used to be kept at work till quite late at night."*

"When do they begin work, and when do they leave off during the day?"

"They begin at six in the morning, summer and winter, and leave off at half-past eight: then they have half-an-hour for breakfast; then they go to the mill till one; then they have an hour for dinner; then the bell rings ten minutes before two, and they go on till six."

"But that is ten hours and a half, and they are only allowed to work now ten hours?"

"Can't say; that is how it is."

"How old are the girls?"

"Some are ten; the oldest twenty-six or twenty-seven."

"Do they belong to the village?"

"Oh, no; the little ones do; but when they are as much as sixteen, they come from the neighbouring villages, and lodge at Stanstead, or if they have elder sisters at work at the mill, they come at fourteen."

* No doubt this was before the ten-hour bill came into operation.

"What do they pay for their lodging?"

"A shilling a week; but those that gets very little, say three shillings and sixpence a week, the neighbours charges them cheap, about ninepence. They bring their food with them, their parents find them food, all except bread, and they go home every week from Saturday till Sunday. They must come back on Sunday, or they would not be in time for their work on Monday morning."

"Did any of the factory girls go to the Crystal Palace with your party?"

"Oh no; if they go, they goes by themselves, people don't like their daughters to company with them."

"What becomes of them when they are twenty-seven?"

"I don't know; they go away from our place, they can't get places, nobody will take them. Sometimes they marry very poor men, and then they get poorer still, for they don't know how to manage no how."

"What wages do they get?"

"To begin with, three shillings and sixpence a week; when they are about twenty, four shillings, the most is eight shillings. They are paid once a fortnight. What they want to eat that they don't bring from home, they buy; the woman that keeps the shop, she trusts them for the fortnight."

"*Some* of them are steady, I suppose?"

"Yes; some are. I remember three sisters who all lodged together at one house. Their parents were

very, very poor; they lived in a village not far off; they had eleven children. Such good girls they were! They always walked backwards and forwards to the mill by themselves, and always in the evening they might be seen sitting at needlework. They *were* good girls! When they went away the people at the lodgings would'nt take in no others. And then there is poor Mrs Hanson; she is a widow, and works at the mill; and she has a little baby, too, in long clothes, which she is obliged to leave nearly all day, that is, from nine till one, and from two till six."

"But I thought you said she is a widow?"

"Yes; the baby was born five months after her husband died. He worked at the mill. He caught his finger somehow, and so the doctors were obliged to cut it off, and he had lock-jaw."

"And what do the girls generally do, all the long summer evenings, and all the long winter nights, after six o'clock?"

"Oh, sometimes they sit at the cottage doors and crotchet; sometimes they walk about in the lanes and fields."

"And what becomes of them when they have no work?"

"Oh, I don't know. I don't know, indeed, what'll become of them this wet summer; they can't work much, because of the floods."

"How do the floods prevent them from working?"

"The wheel gets water-logged; the water's so high, it can't turn."

"Do the girls get paid during that time?"

"Oh, no."

"What do they do then?"

"Oh, they're half-starved some of 'em."

When we add to such statements, that many of those young girls are mothers without being wives, what a picture of feminine labour, helplessness, and sorrow is here! Of labour, not excessive certainly, but of a nature tending to deprive womanhood of all its wealth, even in the peasant girl, unfitting her for the duties of a wife and mother; of helplessness, for what is to become of a girl of sixteen, left to take care of herself, and deprived during the greater part of her time of the shelter of any home, however humble, the care of any mother, however ignorant? of sorrow, for what can compensate to any girl for the loss of her good name, and the respect of her equals?

And whence springs all this wretchedness? There are—we are grieved to state it, but it is so—occupations, with which sickness, misery, and early death are *inseparably* connected. But such is not the case in the mill at Stanstead. The work, though hard, is not incompatible with health, or even comfort. The temptations during the hours of work are few; the noise of the machinery is so great, that little or no communication can be carried on during the time of labour; only a very few men are employed at the mill in the day time, and at night the girls do not work. The whole of the evil arises from the absence of proper influence and care, out of the hours of

labour; the want of womanly sympathy, tenderness, and guidance, for these young, uncared-for labourers. Shall this want continue? Is not this a corner of the vineyard, in which a woman's work is most urgently needed?

CHAPTER V

THE OUTLYING HAMLET.

AT the foot of a beautiful hill, some distance from a village in the south of England, is an out-lying hamlet. It is not neglected, it is not wretched, it is only far off from the church and the village. It must be confessed that many of the inhabitants have a squalid and miserable appearance. "The fever has been so bad there," says some one; "it's the St Giles's of Homerton," says another; "all the worst characters of the neighbourhood go and live there." To judge from their looks, we believe these statements to be true. Yet there are comfortable cottages, ay, and comfort in them, too; so we set it down as a mingled yarn of silk and worsted, and will partly untangle it for our readers.

"The first group I came to," says a visitor to the village, "consisted of father, mother, and sundry children, carrying in twigs and brushwood from a heap at their gate. The woman was very slatternly and untidy, but was civil, and expressed herself well.

'Her husband,' she said, 'earned twelve shillings a week as a farm labourer, and was allowed these loppings and toppings. They weren't much good for firing, soon burnt through, but they were handy to boil the kettle.' A child of twelve, the eldest, I think, was holding a weakly-looking baby of perhaps a year. 'She used to go to the school close by, but now mother couldn't spare her; four of the others went, they paid twopence each a week—one penny was for the schooling, and one penny for the shoe-club.' 'It was a good many mouths to feed,' the woman said, 'with twelve shillings. They got on pretty well though, without going to the parish, unless they were ill, and then they were obliged to get relief. A few months ago, the children were all down with the measles, and this little fellow,' pointing to one about four, 'was quite taken off his feet. She did wish, then, there was any lady near to help her with a drop of broth, or some comforts, for her sick children. She did send to one lady, in the next village; but she said, she had so many sick children already on her list that she could not add to them.'

"Then I was invited into a better-looking cottage, with something of a garden and grass-plot, with hen-coops upon it; but the woman belonging to it was by no means so contented as the last. The room looked comfortable enough, with thick walls and beams, and an open fireplace; but she said 'the brick-floor was damp and unhealthy, and the place was so out of the way and inconvenient, it was no use saying she liked

it, for she didn't, and she didn't suppose she ever should. The clergyman hardly ever called, and the neighbours were not such as she liked to keep company with. It was so far from shops, too; if she had but a penny to spend, she liked to make it go as far as she could, and it would not go far at the one village shop.'

"I next talked to several children who were playing together, and minding their respective babies, on the green; most of them went to school. None of them could tell me how many children there were. Boys and girls are taught together by one governess; on Sunday afternoons the school-room is used for the Church service; there is no Sunday school. They could not even tell me how many classes there were, or how many children in the classes to which they belonged. 'Well,' I said to one, 'are you at the top of your class?' 'No.' 'How many children, then, do you have to pass before you can be at the top?' 'Oh, we don't ever take places; governess doesn't let us do that.' 'What are you taught?' 'Reading, writing, and sums.' 'Are you taught to work?' 'Yes.' 'Does the clergyman often come?' 'Yes, he comes on Mondays, and sometimes in the week besides.' 'And what does he teach you?' He hears us our Catechism, and teaches us the Bible.'

"On one side of the road were gardens in allotments. These could be had, a woman told me, on a payment of six shillings a year; and added, 'it was well worth the money; they got a great deal more

than that *out of* it. Besides it gave the men something *to do of* an evening, and kept them out of the public-house.' This woman had just come in from a hard day's work, hay-making. She hoped I would walk in, and excuse the bit of a muddle the place was in, for that she had no time to tidy it up. Everything *did* look very topsy-turvy, and deplorable. She herself looked unwashed and unkempt, and the children were in various stages of untidiness; but they were all too little to care for themselves. I think she had five, and the eldest did not seem more than eight. She greatly extolled the school, which 'kept the children out of the way when she could not be at hand to attend to them;' but how they were kept from getting into mischief at the dinner-hour, and till she got home in the evening, she did not say. She worked in the fields whenever she could get anything to do. 'Her husband's master was as good a master as any about, and generally found work for him, but in the winter he gave less wages.' She had a little thing, scarcely able to speak, on her knee. It was pleasant to see how she fondled and coaxed him, and how she kept saying, 'Daddy's coming, daddy'll be here soon,' as if it was the best news she could give the child. She made a half sort of excuse for keeping him up so late, 'but you see ma'am,' she said, 'as I didn't the little fellow would hardly know anything of me or his father we have it as we are not at work in the morning, and we don't come back all day.' The next day it was evident

satisfaction, her work was to be in a field immediately opposite her cottage, 'so she should be able to have an eye to the children.' Two of them were seated on the door-step, stripping black currants. 'Did those come out of your garden?' I said. 'Yes; and so she thought she would just get some sugar, and boil them up, and make them into jam; it would be so nice for the children in the winter.' I asked if the Sunday afternoon service was well attended. 'Pretty well,' she said; 'it depended upon the weather; a good many children went, and the women, but the men mostly liked the walk to the parish church. She sent her children to a Dissenting Sunday-school in the neighbourbood. She thought the place was healthy; her children were generally well; they had had measles very badly, and some time ago nearly every body was down with the fever.' The cottage stood in a row, a little way back from the road, with a broad ditch between, crossed by a plank; the ditch was full of water, and was quite sweet and clear, but there had been previously a good deal of heavy rain. In dry weather the ditch is doubtless very unwholesome. Coming away, I met a man who had been digging up some potatoes, and we had a little talk about them; he was 'afraid they were going, and that *was* a bad job; he did not see it was any good to cut the halming off; he'd tried it both ways, and it was just the same.' I admired the beauty of the fields. 'Ah!' he said, 'they be pretty to look at, but they're mighty stiff; you don't go far without

finding that out.' The next woman I spoke to, was a merry old body, quite proud of her age, seventy-three, and of how much she was still able to do. She had been baking, and looked with much satisfaction on the long row of light-brown crisp loaves, she had just drawn out of the oven. She had put the wood in, all ready to light the next time she wanted to bake, though that would not be for a week; but she liked, she said, 'to have things ready before-hand, then she knew what she was about; she could do anything if she could take her time over it; but, if she came to be flustered, then she had to sit down. Sometimes her old man would call out, "Come, mother, look sharp!" and hurry her, so that she got all of a tremble and could do nothing. She liked to do everything for herself, and she had a lodger to do for besides.' I said, 'I think somehow people of your generation are stronger, and get through more work than the present.' 'Well,' she answered, 'that puts me out now! I've a daughter, such a poor creature, who doesn't do half that I do. But I can't walk far.' I asked if she were able to go to the parish church, or if she went to the school-room? 'No;' she said, 'she could not get to church, but she went to the little place; she did not much like it, there were so many children, and they fidgeted; and she supposed the clergyman was not able to have a clerk, but there ought to be some one. Children would be children, and how could they behave unless they were taught?' 'Well, but,' I said,

'don't they go to the school?' 'Yes, they went to the school, but they didn't behave so well as they used. They'd got a new governess, a young thing; she didn't know that she had the knack of teaching like the last—the last was married, and a very comfortable woman, and somehow had a way with her of teaching the children. She didn't care for young, new-fangled governesses. She liked children to be taught to speak, and to behave themselves, and the old governess used to do that. There was everything in doing that. She had two granddaughters; one had been taught by an old-fashioned governess, and, if I could but see her, I should find that she could speak as well as I could. The other had been taught by a young thing, and was quite giddy and different. Schools were fine things, that they were, these charity schools! Why! in her day, there wasn't such a thing known, and her parents were poor people, and the like of them couldn't afford to pay to have their children made scholards, and so she had never learnt to read, and that *was* a pity.' I hoped she had some one to read the Bible to her sometimes. 'Oh, yes! her old man was a beautiful scholard, he could read anything, and he always did when she asked him, and was as good a husband as woman could wish; he never went near a public-house, and seldom touched a drop of beer; if he had done an extra hard day's work, and wanted a little, she always went and fetched it for him. It *was* hard when the men drank, but she thought the wives

often sent them to it. It was their business to make the homes comfortable.' I asked if there was much drunkenness in the place? 'Sometimes there was,' she said, 'but not so much as she had heard of in other places; there was but one public-house.' She spoke of the dearness of provisions, but not in a complaining way, and said, 'How everything had risen in price! there was no getting an odd-bit of cheese without paying such a long price for it.' 'Yes,' I said, 'and meat is so dear.' 'Oh, crikey!' was her reply, 'meat is dear!' in a tone which implied they seldom tasted it."

Now this is by no means an extreme case, and yet there is no Sunday-school. How do the children pass the Sabbath? The probability is, that a few go to the neighbouring Dissenting school, and the rest go to play. One woman says, "There is no help in sickness, except from the lady at the next village." There are no "Mothers' Meetings," to teach the mothers even domestic duties; one woman buys everything at the village shop; there are no "Cottage Lectures;" no "Working-men's Reading-room;" no "Missionary Meeting;" no "District visiting;" no meetings for reading the Scripture, and prayer. In short, with the exception of the afternoon service on Sunday, and an occasional visit from the clergyman on week-days, there is not one of those means at work which God has blessed for making known His ways among the poor. Yet this, as we have before observed, is by no means an extreme case. There is more comfort in

the village than would be credited by one who judged of the people only by their looks, and the appearance of their dwellings; it must be added, we were told that "the fever" had been caused by the grossest negligence of sanitary regulations, and that this had been remedied. The account we have given touches chiefly upon the social and physical condition of the villagers; but from it we may form an estimate of their probable amount of religious knowledge.

Love and Duty in Lowly Places.

CHAPTER I.

TOM THE THRESHER; OR, THE LOVING SON.

AT the top of a straggling village street, in the county of Surrey, not very far from the church, stood a labourer's cottage. It was a roomy, comfortable dwelling, in the midst of a large garden, filled with apple and pear trees, gooseberry and currant bushes, and overshadowed by lofty elms.

This pleasant home was the property of a labouring man, a bricklayer and well-digger, bequeathed to him by his forefathers, and now sheltering snugly under its warm roof himself, his wife, and a family of children. But is it a pleasant home? Let us look again. It is true the shadows of the elms are broad and beautiful, and the drops of sunlight are sprinkled on the ground beneath them; the rosy blossoms of the apple trees, too, are very beautiful, and so is the fresh green of the gooseberry and currant bushes; nevertheless, the aspect of the house and garden is anything but pleasant, the whole place has a look of neglect and decay. The house is

neglected, the garden is neglected; just round the house, indeed, a faint attempt has been made to rake up a few beds, and plant a few cabbages, &c., but the greater portion of the ground is covered with scant coarse grass, and here and there with a luxuriant growth of weeds. "A drunkard's dwelling!" mentally exclaims the reader. Not so; John Pack was an honest, sober, steady man, the kindest of husbands, the most affectionate of fathers, his only fault being, as the neighbours said, "he was too still," that is, he was a careless, indifferent man; he took our Lord's words in the wrong sense, and provided he had enough for the day, he cared nothing about the morrow. Married to a woman who loved him, inheriting his tiny rural estate from a grandfather, who had spoiled him, no profligate, addicted to no vices, he had contrived to support an ailing wife, and a family of children, partly on the moderate proceeds of his most moderate labour, and partly by mortgaging his small property, taking care at the same time never to pay the mortgage.

"People in England," observed a brisk young Canadian once to us, "*never get on;* at the best they *only stay.*" So John Pack only "stayed;" but we are wrong, he did not "stay;" nothing "stays," neither time, nor life, nor circumstances. His own years did not stay, youth and strength were passing, old age, with its feebleness and helplessness, was coming; his children did not stay, they were growing from babyhood to childhood, and might reasonably

"JOHN PACK BEING RAISED FROM THE WELL."—(See Page 75.)

have hoped, with John's property and advantages, to have been something beyond day labourers. But then he was so kind to them ! so good to their mother ! there really was peace under that quiet roof, though it could not be a lasting peace, for everything was going, as people say, to rack and ruin.

John's work often lay far from home. One day he was sent for to brick in a well, in a village at a little distance. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, while he was at his work, that a great crash was heard. The neighbours ran to the spot, "Oh !" shouted the men, "the well has fallen in !" It was so, indeed, and poor John was lying hidden beneath the rubbish. He was a good fellow was John. Every hand in the parish which could help was set to remove the fallen mass ; with thoughtful care the villagers kept the news from reaching his wife ; evening and night were coming certainly, but it was John's habit when he went to a distance to work, to remain all night ; and he was such a sober, steady man, that his wife felt no uneasiness on the subject ; so the shutters were quietly closed in the old homestead under the shadow of the elms, and the wife and children slept happily one night more.

The people hoped when they brought the news to the wife, they would also be able to say, "We have got him out, he is still alive ;" but evening passed, and all the first hours of the night, and John still continued buried in the well, and his neighbours and friends still diligently working for his release. The

morning sunlight began to dawn when they had the happiness of lifting him from his dreadful grave, but alas! it was too late, poor John was dead.

It was now about four o'clock in the morning, and one of the country people set off to the village of Stanstead, to carry the tidings to the wife; in about an hour he came in sight of the house, and when he reached the gate, he saw Tom, the eldest son, at work in the garden. "Tom," said the countryman, "thy father's dead!" Then followed the sad tale of how he died. Tom went into the house to his mother.

The neighbours and friends brought John's body home and laid it in his dwelling, and from thence they carried him to his grave in the churchyard of his own village; and when that grave closed upon him, there was many a heart that felt for the widow and fatherless.

They pitied; but who was there that could help? Help sometime comes from whence we least expect it. Often we say, "What should I have done without such a person?" or "What should I have done without such a thing?" It is well, not only *then* to remember that God *did* send such a person and such a thing, when they were wanted; but also when they are wanted, to believe that He *will* send them.

Mrs Pack had always been an ailing woman, and the shock of her husband's death had altogether unnerved her; she could do nothing, think of nothing; she felt, she knew not what; and how were the [redacted] The family consisted of five;

Tom, the eldest, a lad of eighteen, who has been already mentioned, was able to earn his own living ; then the next, Mary, might go to service ; but then followed three little ones, Dick, Harriet, and Johnnie, able to do nothing but eat. "Mother," said Tom, "let Mary go to service, and I will keep you and the children." The mother felt it was a sad alternative to throw such a burden upon a young lad ; but there was no choice between that, and the workhouse ; so Mary went to service, and Tom undertook the care of the family till his mother should be better. He got a place at a neighbouring farmer's, and nine shillings a week wages,—good wages for a lad of eighteen ; but Tom could dig and reap, and thresh well, he was a good farm hand, and very industrious.

It was spring now. When the summer came, the mother hoped she should be better and able to earn a little herself ; but the summer came with its long warm sunny days, and light, soft, and cheerful nights, and autumn with its working days, but the mother was not among the busy hands ; and then winter came, but still she was no better. All this time Tom had diligently laboured in the same place, for the same master, and kept all the family upon his earnings.

When the year opened again, and the leaves and blossoms of the early spring came forth, it became evident that Tom's mother was worse. She had hitherto contrived to go about a little, and keep things comfortable, but now she took to her bed. Through all those long nights, Tom nursed his mother

with unwearied affection. He slept in a little room next to hers, and when he heard her restless and coughing, he came in and gave her water, or raised her up. Early in the morning, not long after dawn, he was again at his work, and industrious though he was, it must be confessed he often nodded over it; but he found friends; his master, the farmer, would sometimes say, "There, Tom, leave off now, and go home to your mother," and the farmer's wife would often send nice things to the sick woman. The want of "nice things" was one of Tom's troubles. The doctor said, his mother must have "nice things," mutton broth and port wine, and Tom did not know how to get them; he did not like to ask the parish for anything, and those three little mouths, and the food necessary for himself, made a great hole in his wages. Tom put all the children, and himself too, upon an allowance of dry bread and potatoes, that he might get his mother "nice things;" and often when he had been up a great part of the night, he set off to his early morning's task, with no other breakfast than a dry crust. The poor woman never left her bed now, and so could know nothing of all these things. She knew that people were good to her, and sent her presents. A kind neighbour, Anna, used to come and wash her clothes, and "tidy up" the house a bit, and everybody was very good and kind to her, and she laid there, and suffered patiently and peacefully, putting in practice, we hope, that which she knew of her duty towards God.

Thus passed the second summer and the second autumn, and now the second winter since her husband's death came round once more. The mother continued to get worse. One Sunday night she seemed so ill, that Tom could not make up his mind to go to bed at all. He sat up with her, lying down and taking a little sleep occasionally; and the next, and the next, and the next, it was the same, until the next Sunday came. From one Sunday to the other, Tom had never had his clothes off, and yet every day he went to his work as usual. No wonder, as Tom said, he almost went to sleep over it. The next week came, and the mother was no better; another Sunday, and Tom had never taken off his clothes. At length, one cold snowy night, when Tom as usual was waiting upon her, she surprised him by saying she should like to have a cup of tea and a bit of toast. "Oh! that you shall, mother," said Tom, and he set to work immediately to light the fire, boil the kettle, and make the toast; and as soon as the tea and toast were ready, he took it to her. She spoke quite cheery to him; how pleasant it was to hear her! "I am better Tom," she said, "better than I have been for many months."

That morning, when daylight came, Tom set off [illegible]th a light heart to his work. It was too cold and [illegible]wy to work in the fields, but he had threshing to [illegible]in the barn, and all the morning his flail went [illegible]a steady unceasing bang. At twelve, the [illegible] wife looked in at the barn; she did not

usually do so, and Tom was surprised. "Tom," she said, "I think you'd better go home to dinner." So Tom laid his flail down, and set off home through the snow. In crossing one of the fields, he met the carter. The carter had heavy news; he had been to the farm, but the farmer's wife could not make up her mind to tell Tom; his Mother was dead!

The nightly offices of love, and the daily acts of self-denial for his mother's sake, were now over for poor Tom. But the last sad parting, and its attendant needs, yet remained; where should he obtain the money to lay her in the grave? To apply to the parish was not to be thought of; the best way was, to get some one to trust him with the expenses, and to pay as he could.

This act of duty performed, Tom turned his attention to his family circumstances. There were still, the three children at home, the two boys, and the little girl; either he must continue to support them, or they must now go to the workhouse. We need scarcely say which alternative he chose. The elder boy, indeed, might earn a little, but there was another expense to be incurred. Tom could not possibly take care of the children entirely by himself, now that his mother was gone; so, upon reflection, he thought it better to have his sister Mary home for that purpose.

So Tom was master, and Mary was mistress, and the young household was conducted tolerably well. Sometimes there were little skirmishes, when Mary wanted to keep company with girls whom her brother

thought she had better avoid, and one of the boys built a rabbit hutch, which Tom knocked down ; neighbours, always prone to interfere with those who take care of children not their own, exclaimed against it as unkind ; but "I don't care," said Tom, "nothing makes boys take to thieving like having rabbits, and nothing to give them ; where, I should like to know, are the turnips and carrots to come from ? out of the farmer's fields ?"

Tom knew there was no money to buy food for rabbits, for, in addition to being very poor, he was in debt, besides what he owed for the funeral. This thought gave him great uneasiness ; however poorly the family might live, if only upon bread and potatoes, whatever stint they might make, it was still very difficult to live, and have anything left over for the debts. Tom began to turn his thoughts as to how he might make a little money beyond his daily wages. There was a good garden, as we have before said, round the cottage ; this, if well dug, and planted with vegetables, might, he considered, yield a good deal of useful kitchen stuff, which, with the fruit, he thought, he might sell to his neighbours not so well off in this respect as himself. But then the trees ! those fine old elms were death to cabbages, turnips, and peas ! their large spreading boughs, which dappled so pleasantly with light and shade the cottage walls and garden ground, kept out the air and sunlight which were wanted to bring to maturity the fruits of the earth. Tom, therefore, leaving one to stand as the

last of its race, cut down all the rest, and set to work to dig and plant this fine plot of ground. There were two fine lilac bushes, a red and a white, which stood at the bottom of the garden. Even the neighbours asked that they might be spared, they were so beautiful. "I can get a bushel of potatoes out of the ground," said Tom disdainfully, and off went the lilacs. He had forgotten in this proceeding that the garden was not entirely his own. When the news of the fall of the elms reached the lady who held the mortgage, she rather angrily sent for Tom. This was awkward; Tom certainly could not pay the hundred pounds; he should have thought of that before he cut down the elms. "If I had but your character," said an unprincipled man to an honest one, "I could make a good thing of it;" an honest character, however, is equally available for honest purposes, and so Tom found. A neighbour hearing of his trouble, sent to him to offer to advance the hundred pounds on the cottage, at ten shillings less yearly interest than he was then paying.

Hard living and hard work combined, began to lessen the amount of debt. The grocer was paid; the grocer had been very kind during the mother's life, and told Tom to have whatever he wanted. By and by the burial expenses were paid likewise, and soon all the other debts; but the burden was great in such early youth, and the neighbours pitied Tom's stooping gait, the proof of his unceasing labours. Still he was getting on in the world. The garden be-

came very profitable, and as he grew older, he had higher wages. His chief occupation was threshing; and now he was trusted to go out with the machine. A threshing-machine is too expensive for every farmer to possess; one was let out in the village of Stanstead, and Tom was the man who had the management of it. It must be owned it was rather a lucrative than a pleasant post, for the man who has the principal care of the machine, feeds it; the carter sits in the centre to drive the horses round and round, the latter being blinded of the eye nearest the machine; the feeding it consists in pouring in the corn which has to be threshed, and as the machine is at the same time throwing out all the chaff, dust, and dirt, which is separated from the corn, the thresher looks, say the villagers, very like a chimney-sweeper, only we really think the dirt must be of a browner and pleasanter nature; at this occupation Tom earned half-a-crown a day.

Thus the years passed on. The boys and girls grew up, and were able to get their own living. They all did well in life; one brother became foreman in a brewery, another a small farmer, and the sisters married.

Tom was left alone in his pleasant cottage. "Now surely," thought the neighbours, "he will take a wife." But no, he still continued a bachelor. When Anna's husband asked him to come and have dinner or tea with them, he would say, "No, no, there's no place like home;" and when the neighbours laughed and

asked him why he did not get married, he would reply, "he had had trouble enough,"

Sometimes Anna's little daughter Letty, would come over once a week and clean up his house, making, as Tom said, the kitchen bricks look like cherries, and the lines between like snow; but at other times Tom did everything for himself, old-bachelor fashion; he made his bed, he tidied his rooms, he cooked his dinner, he could even make a pudding! And a very good pudding too, so Letty said. One Sunday morning, Tom put his house to rights as usual, then made his pudding, got his bacon and potatoes ready long before church time, and proceeded to make up his fire; grates are not used in that rural district, but iron bars are placed across the hearth, on which the wood is put, and on that some peat; the dinner is cooked in iron pots slung over the fire; by carefully placing the peat at a certain distance, it is possible so to manage the fire, that the dinner can be cooked during church time, and no one is obliged to stay at home to attend to it. Tom made all these arrangements; put his bacon and potatoes into one pot, and his pudding into another, and then went up the village to feed his pigs. But a neighbour opposite, who loved a joke, had been watching Tom's proceedings, and as soon as he was gone after the pigs, slipped in through the door, which Tom had left open, whipped up the pudding out of the pot, and transferred it to the one over his wife's fire. Tom came back very sedately, looked round, saw all safe,

"THE LOSS OF THE PUDDING."—(See Page 84.)

locked the door, and went off to church as usual. A neighbour who stepped in after church, found Tom dining off bacon and potatoes, *minus* pudding ; it came back in course of time, all ready cooked, but rather too late for dinner.

When Tom grew tired of his bachelor life, he took in a man and his wife, to share the cottage with him, and the woman, the neighbours said, "did for him ;" there was only one other inmate besides themselves, and that was little Letty's cat. Letty had gone to service, and left Tom her cat to take care of. Pussy was accommodated with a chair by the fireside ; and no one was allowed to disturb her. To please Letty, Tom would ask pussy when Michaelmas day came round,* if she would stay with him again for a year and a day, without any advance of wages.

The cottage and garden were now Tom's own, for the mortgage had been paid off, as well as the other debts. The piece of ground was so well situated, that a person offered him "a good bit of money" for it, the neighbours said, to build upon ; but Tom was well off now, and apparently contented. He would not sell his little patrimony. He had enough for himself, and enough, so said his friends, to give away, and even to share occasionally with those who were less industrious, or less prosperous than himself. He had strictly obeyed the apostolic rule, to labour that he might have to give ; whether his riches were only for this world or not, we cannot say ; we tell his story

* The period and length of time for hiring farm servants.

as it was told to us, a village story, of the faithful love of a good son, and a kind brother. It is a veritable tale, and we ask those to ponder it well, who say that the feelings of the poor are not so acute as those of persons in a higher station.

CHAPTER II.

THE FAITHFUL WIFE.

IT was a dark, dull morning; a leaden-coloured sky above, and the bare ground beneath, was just an English picture of the last days of winter, or, what are called the first days of spring. Still, the bare branches of the trees, and the greenness of the fields, were pleasant to look at. Almost everything is pleasant in the country; there are, however, exceptions, and one of these exceptions is certainly a brick-field. The damp soil, full of puddles; the long, straight lines of wet bricks; the low, stifling kiln, are ugly and monotonous objects; and the freshest air from the sweetest meadow of cowslips and buttercups would be polluted by the nauseous smells of a brick-field.

In the one we are describing a number of men were at work; a rough set they were, as those generally are who labour at this calling. They were following their various occupations in different parts of the field; amongst them were the moulder and

awe-bearer. The business of the moulder is, of course, to mould the clay into bricks; the business of the awe-bearer is to take the wet bricks thus moulded and pile them up to dry. But what a difference there was between one of the awe-bearers and the rest of the labourers! She was a neat, clean, respectable young woman. What could bring her to such a place, or to do such work, fit only for the roughest of men? Perhaps the knowledge of *what motives* brought her, called forth the respect of her rude fellow-labourers; for that motive was, love to her husband, and a desire to save him from the consequences of his sin. Her husband was out "on the drink," as it is called; and Mary, knowing that either the other men would be hindered from performing their work through his absence, or else that he would be dismissed and another engaged to do it, had, on this day, filled his place. This she was in the habit of doing, day after day, whenever her husband was disinclined to do his own work, or disabled from doing it.

Mary loved her husband. She might, she did, day after day, in the manner we have described, fill his place in the brick-field, but she could not save him from the miserable and degrading effects of his sin. Often she sat alone, and thought, and grieved, and wept over his sin, yet she did not know what means to adopt to win him from it. "If he would only sign the pledge, and become a teetotaller, perhaps that might cure him!" So thought Mary; but how was this to be effected? By the best of human teachers

—her own example. She would sign the pledge, she thought, herself; and perhaps in time, with patience, he might be induced to do the same.

She did so. Years went by, and Mary's husband still continued a drunkard. But did she, on this account, relax her efforts, give up her self-denial, or her earnest endeavours to win him back to soberness? No; one, two, three, four, five, six years she kept the pledge. It is far easier to begin to do right, than to continue stedfast in doing it.

At length the wish of Mary's heart was granted; her husband signed the pledge. She had always been affectionate and assiduous in her care for his wants, but now she redoubled those cares. She carried him nice dinners to the brick-field, and by her attention in various ways to his comfort, tried to encourage him in doing right.

Unhappily, however, Mary's husband worked for a publican, who expected the men employed by him to spend six shillings during the week in drink, to be paid out of their wages on Saturday night; and this master was so dissatisfied to find that Mary's husband had left off this habit, that the poor man was induced to begin again, having kept the pledge scarcely so many *weeks* as Mary had *years* for his sake.

The miseries of home commenced again; poverty and sorrow defied all Mary's efforts to keep them from the door. But her husband had found a sober life to be the happier one; and so, at her persuasion,

he left his master, and fortunately succeeded in getting work elsewhere. And now the happiness of Mary's life began; her husband and she worked and rejoiced together; every year added to their possessions. Their home, even in those sad days when Mary worked as a bricklayer's labourer, was always neat and clean; now it was the picture of comfort; they had food, clothing, a supply for all their wants, and many friends; and they were happy in their love for one another.

Money accumulated as time went by; what should they do with it? The prudent and industrious Mary thought of a little shop. A shop they took. Her plain, honest, and upright dealings brought many customers, and business prospered. Her early sorrows had taught her sympathy for others; she was always ready to relieve the suffering, and she tried with her whole heart to recommend to others that sobriety which, in her husband, had been such a blessing to her. So Mary lived, beloved by many, respected by all, and passing her happy days in the enjoyment of the fruit of her good conduct in youth.

"How thy garments are warm when He quieteth the earth by the south wind." The change from the days of adversity to the days of prosperity, are as when, after a long, cold spring, with nipping east winds and biting blasts, the genial air blows softly from the south, and all the flowers and blossoms of the season begin to expand with the promise of summer. But to long-continued adversity the spirit be-

comes in some degree inured, and the suffering is not perhaps so great as when the sunshine, so long waited for, suddenly disappears, and it is winter again. Mary had enjoyed her years of prosperity, but they were suddenly overclouded. She was struck with a deadly and incurable disease. It is a dreadful thing to have no hope of better days; Mary had none. She had done her duty in this world; the sense of duty and her warm affections, had carried her through all her trials, and she had had her reward. But she must leave this world; increasing sorrow, pain, and suffering, must be her lot till that time should come. She had not thought of another world. "What shall I do?" she said to herself; "I have not one action that I can carry to the throne of God, and say, 'Almighty God, I have done that good action; reward me for it.'" Praiseworthy as her life had been before man, she now felt for the first time she was a sinner before God.

But the voice of comfort came. The missionary* read by her bedside the promises of the gospel. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He reminded her of the leper, the centurion's servant, and Peter's wife's mother. "These persons," he told her, "did not present their own good

* The missionary to whom we are indebted for the circumstances of this case, is the one who has done such a good work among the "Outcast Classes." He is also the one whose length of service dates the longest among the London City Missionaries.

works to merit the favour of the Redeemer; all they presented was their afflictions." In like manner, let her present the afflictions of her soul to Christ. "Ah, Mr ——," she exclaimed, "I know nothing at all about it; I must confess I do not."

It pleased God to teach her. As the days and the weeks went by, and she heard from the missionary, time after time, the precepts and promises of the gospel, light came into her soul. She heard and believed. About this time the missionary, being absent for a few weeks, and remembering Mary in her sufferings, wrote to her, and advised her to read the fourteenth chapter of St John. On his return home, when, in his usual round of visits, he entered her room, she put out her hand to him, and said, "God bless you! I've read that beautiful chapter in St John; I've read it over and over again. O those beautiful words, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you!" and He has comforted me. I believe that if I were to die this night, Christ would receive me into one of those mansions. Ain't it beautiful! I never read anything like it. It makes me long to die to be there." The missionary said to her, "You have more to endure, before that time comes." She calmly replied, "Perhaps so; but I don't see how I can; for no one knows what I endure but God and myself. But it don't matter; if I'm only ready, my Saviour will receive me." "Do you think," said the missionary, "that the Saviour will receive you, because you have done something for

Him?" She turned her eyes intently upon him, saying, "No; it is Christ who has done something for me."

From this time forth, she seemed to be trying to acquaint herself with death; and so entirely did she lose all fear of it, that the missionary doubted whether she wished to die, to be delivered from her sorrows and sufferings here. "No," she said, in answer to his questions, "I wish to die to be with Jesus. When I am in my grave," she continued, "sing beside it the hymn I love so much, 'Heaven is my home,' and tell those whom I leave behind, the comfort I felt in those beautiful words, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.'"

When her husband sat by her at the last, she tried to say to him all that her affection dictated; then folding her hands, she softly said, "I am happy, I am happy;" and so she died.

CHAPTER III.

BREAD OR FIRE?—THE KIND AUNT—THE LONG WALK —OUR HONEST FRIEND—DARBY AND JOAN.

Bread or Fire; *a City Missionary's Story.* "About two years ago, I became acquainted with a family residing at Ratcliffe, reduced in circumstances, in consequence of the husband having met with an accident from a machine while at work, which cut off four fingers from his left hand. A feeling employer would have retained him in his service, he being scarcely less capable of working in some department of the concern, than he was prior to his misfortune. At that time, his wife kept a small shop, but not being able to renew her stock, the support thus derived gradually came to an end. The husband went daily out seeking a job, chiefly by carrying sailors' luggage, but only now and then finding one; his earnings were very small, so that one article after another, was parted with; until at length, through their not being able to meet the demands of the landlord, they were ejected from the house. Up to this

time, a period of nine months, my visits were most kindly received, and I found them to be respectable persons with peaceable dispositions, not given to murmuring and complaining; but, on the contrary, concealing as far as possible their destitution, and making the best of everything. I often, indeed, wondered how they managed to bear up as they did, under such deprivations. Some time previously they had a son who died of consumption at the age of eighteen. He was a pious Sunday-school teacher, much respected in life by his fellow-labourers, and not a little lamented at death; a poem was written to his memory, and printed after his death.

"For about fifteen months I lost sight of Mrs H——, until she called upon me last week, stating that a neighbour, whose husband was ill, had received a small gift from the sitting magistrate, and she wished to know whether I would draw out a petition for her, with the view of obtaining something also from the same quarter. This was promised; but on requesting her to get it signed by a clergyman in the parish, it appeared that no one beside myself knew much about her case, and therefore I was desired to complete it. This caused me to hesitate, being unwilling to assume what might seem to some too much; but her necessity, as well as a sense of my duty, could not be resisted. Her appearance was somewhat respectable; and although she said little, and that in a faint tone, a tear on her cheek was indicative of her real distress. On her return from the court, she seemed

much revived, having received four shillings, out of which two shillings and sixpence was paid for the rent of her room in —— Street, —— Road, where I have been several times since, feeling much touched with her pitiable condition. This is the second place to which they have repaired since leaving the place already named. Her husband has scarcely met with anything of late, and for three successive days they have been almost without any kind of food, the family consisting of a boy of fourteen, and two little girls, the elder being seven years old.

"One evening, while these babes were lying in bed, covered with something like sackcloth, the poor, afflicted mother went to look at them, fearing, as she said, that something might have happened to them. The younger said, on seeing the fire nearly out, and knowing that there was not any coal in the room—which indeed was not anything uncommon, but now the weather was very cold,—'Mother, I wish you had not bought the bread!' When I asked this child, 'Which would you rather have—bread or fire?' she replied, 'Fire!' On Thursday last, being entirely destitute of food and fire, the boy, on hearing his two thin, pale-faced little sisters crying of cold and hunger, took a tin, and begged a fishmonger to give him some heads of fish, such as are usually thrown away; and while the little anxious ones were eagerly watching the process of boiling them, the fire went out, which seemed to disappoint their hopes, and they began to cry. The brother, however, managed somehow to

o procure a piece of rope, which enabled him, in some ashion, to complete his task, and the picking of those fish heads had pacified them. On the evening of the same day I called, when the door was opened by the husband, who had just come in. The wife did not at first say anything, but was walking about the room, and drying up her tears. I saw the picked bones lying on the table; no fire in the grate; the youngest child was in bed, and I could not help going to see and speak with this innocent-looking lamb, who had just been relieved by the efforts of her brother. They had hoped that father would have brought home what might have procured a loaf, but having been disappointed, the mother was weeping for her children. The Lord, however, that evening provided them with both bread and fire.

"On a previous occasion I witnessed the boy's affection for his sisters, who were sitting up in bed, while their bits of clothing were being dried after washing. He went and put a saucer to their mouths, containing warm water, saying, 'It will warm you!' I was struck with their pleasant looks. These persons, in the greatest poverty imaginable consistent with human existence in this world, and with much bodily affliction, for the wife suffers greatly from sickness, seem patient, calm, and pleasant."

The Kind Aunt.—On the first floor of a poor house in Sparrow Corner, Rosemary Lane, a city

missionary, making his usual round, entered a room, where he found a sick child alone in bed, a little fellow of about nine years old; his Testament was lying beside him. As the missionary continued his visits from time to time, he saw two other little boys also, about eight or nine years old, at play in the room. The mother was a quiet, grave, person, suffering from severe illness, but able still to go about; her heart seemed open to receive the word of God. "My place," she said, "will soon be vacant;" and the tears started to her eyes. One day when the missionary was paying his usual visit, he looked round upon the children, and questioned the mother about them; they were all dressed alike, and seemed nearly the same age and height; the little sick fellow was running about again. The mother told him, that her widowed sister had died some time before, and left three sons; the eldest was old enough to work for himself, but he could not provide for the two little lads; that she would not let them go to the workhouse; but with her husband's consent, who was but a poor labouring man, she had taken her sister's orphans to her home, the little room at Sparrow Corner. She made no difference between them and her own children; they were all boys, were dressed alike, and went to school together; some school in which, partaking of the old city gifts, they were clothed and educated free of cost. But she feared her life would be short; and "I cannot expect," she said to the missionary, "that my husband, kind as he has been,

will keep them after I am gone." The missionary took out his Bible and read the first Psalm, pointing out to her the safe and happy condition of those who put their trust in the Lord. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous." He considers all the circumstances of their life. Then kneeling down, he prayed with the mother and her children, commending the orphans, and her whose heart was so greatly troubled for them, to Him "who has promised," said the missionary, "so much to the merciful."

The Long Walk.—In the spring of 1859, there was in the Ipswich county gaol, a boy whose term of imprisonment was drawing to a close. He had been convicted for stealing a watch. He was quite a stranger; no one knew anything about him; he had no friends. The governor, compassionating the boy, and pitying the probable life he would lead when discharged from the prison, made some inquiries of him concerning himself. He found his home was far away in Yorkshire; he had a father and mother, brothers and sisters; but ashamed, we will hope of his sin, he had kept his parents in ignorance of his punishment; now he wished to return home. The governor wrote to the father, a poor labouring man. There was a family council held in the humble Yorkshire home: what was to be done? The labourer had twelve children. He had not got, and could not get, sufficient money to go for his child and

bring him home, and, alone, could he be trusted to come? The eldest brother undertook to manage the matter. Upon putting all they could spare together, it was found to amount to eight shillings, almost equal to a week's wages. With this sum he started to walk from Yorkshire to Ipswich, and being a bricklayer, took his trowel with him, hoping to earn something for his brother and himself by a job on the way home, in case the money should not last out. A letter was accomplished to the governor, warmly thanking him for letting the father know the condition of his poor boy, as he called him, and saying the elder son would start that day from Yorkshire on foot, and begging the governor to keep the boy until his brother should arrive. The eight shillings held out almost all the way; but he spent the last penny at Stowemarket, a place about twelve miles from Ipswich, where he arrived at night. The next morning he had no money to pay for a breakfast, and twelve miles yet to walk to Ipswich, where he arrived very weary and footsore, still carrying the trowel, on which he relied to provide for his own wants and his brother's, on their homeward road. He was not, however, wholly thrown on this resource; the governor gave the lad and his brother a good meal, and when they started on their homeward tramp, some money for the journey.

Our Honest Friend.—Some years ago, we gave, in our records of the poor man's life, the story of the Little Street, and some few particulars of old Martha's lodger, the travelling baker. We shewed him sitting in the old sailor's chair, telling the story of his early days; of how his heart was first won to God by hearing a hymn sung, "so confident-like the singers seemed;" of how he courted his lost wife, and how she told him she could point out to him the exact spot in the L—— road, where the idea of having him for a husband first came into her head; of that young wife's last hours and happy departure in the Lord, the account of which he had carried about with him for twenty years, rewriting it, as the paper with reading and rereading, folding and unfolding, dropt to pieces; of his cosy winter evenings with old Martha, when, the weary work of the day being over, they read and reread their favourite books, such as the travels of "True Godliness," and first and foremost of all, the Bible.

The lodger had seen "better days;" but, in the time at which we knew him, he was extremely poor. He now gained his living by selling saveloys one part of the day, and pies and buns the other. It was a very sorry living indeed; long miles through wet streets and over cold downs had he to walk, before he could make even a few pence. Once when he was out-patient to the hospital, old Martha said to us, "You see physic's no good; what he wants is, a new pair of shoes." He was an odd man; it was difficult

to tell what he thought, and he had a wonderful tact of keeping out of the way of all visitors. He was formerly in business, but had been unfortunate, lost all, and got into debt; he had married again, and been unhappy in his marriage; he and his wife were parted; we cannot say whose fault it was.

One day in every week, wet or dry, he walked over to a village about eight miles off to see his old mother. At length she died, and left him £60; a large fortune for an inhabitant of "The Little Street!" he *might* have set up a shop with it; he *might* have done many things; he *did* treat himself to a day's holiday. "I have been up to London for a day's pleasure," he said to us on our next visit. "Oh, indeed!" said we, "and where did you go when in London?"

"To see John Bunyan's grave."

"And where else?"

"No where else; that's what I went to London for."

This, we were afterwards told, was almost the only portion of the money left to him, which he spent upon himself. All the rest he devoted to pay the debts he had contracted when in business twenty years before; hunting out the parties to whom he owed them, with all imaginable zeal and industry, and refreshing their memories, when time and more recent events had caused them to forget the transaction. That duty done, he returned to his small room in the little street, where he continues still to support himself by his trade in pies and saveloys, as old Martha's poor lodger.

Darby and Joan.—"I met that funny old Mrs Hedgecombe this morning," says a village visitor; "her husband is ill, and Mr Bateman wants him to go into Chelsea Hospital, or, as she expressed it, 'The Queen knows that he has been a faithful servant of the country, and has fought bravely both by land and sea, whenever he was required, and it is therefore *her* wish that he should go to Chelsea.' 'Well, but,' I said, 'what is to become of you?' In her odd way, she said, 'Miss, it's for *his* good. That's what *he* says, "What's to become of *you?*" but the Queen wishes him not to be hurried, but to take time to consider. That's what I says too, to the curate, "We've lived together for thirty years;" and as I said to the other curate, when he asked me, "That we would live together in sickness and health, and help one another, and nought but death should part us;" and what was the use of my promising that, if he's to go off to Chelsea?' 'And I paid the money too,' she said, evidently thinking that a very binding part of the marriage service. I recommended her not to consent to it. He gets 1s. 4d. a day as out-pensioner at Chelsea, so they are not badly off. Hedgecombe is a tall man, six feet high; and, being bedridden, probably requires lifting, which, I believe, is almost more than her strength can manage; still what could become of her? It would be cruel to send her to the workhouse, and how can she live upon the parish allowance of 2s. 6d. per week? However, this morning, she came to say her husband had decided he

would *not* leave her. 'That's better, Miss,' she said, 'ain't it, than breaking the promise? This is sickness, ain't it? and we must help one another.' I gave her a cup of coffee, and some cold meat and bread, which she seemed much to appreciate. She gave me back the plate and cup, saying, 'I'm sure, Miss, I'm truly thankful for what I have received.'"

CHAPTER IV.

"MY KITTY;" OR, THE STORY OF THE SLOP-SHOP WOMAN.

Two robins, about to build their nest, were fluttering round a country house belonging to a great engineer.* Somehow, they could not easily suit themselves with a convenient spot. At length they flew in at an open window, and finding a quiet, uninhabited room, they agreed to take possession of it. The nest was built, the little ones hatched; all went on prosperously; until, one unhappy morning, the parent bird went out in search of food, leaving his mate sitting on the nest. When he came back with the supply, he could not get into the room; a servant, accidentally entering, had shut the window. Poor little things! The one kept her wings spread over her nestlings, and starved to death with them; her mate without, beat himself, day after day, against the window-panes. Three days this went on. At length the bird was observed by the master of the house; he went up and opened the

* George Stephenson. This incident is related in his Life.

She had only one small back room, in a Rag Fair lane, yet for this she paid two shillings a week. The rent paid, barely so much as two shillings sometimes remained for food, coals, &c., and for candles, as Sarah worked early and late at her needle.

It was a hard struggle for daily bread; often there was *not enough*, that is, not enough for both; then old Sarah gave it to her Kitty, and she, occasionally for a whole day together, went herself without.

Then followed sickness; she had a bad leg and became lame. She could hardly get to the shop to fetch her work, and take it home, for the pain. She became an out-patient of an hospital, but got no better. Of course not; the want was probably food, not medicine. How could a poor old woman, who denied herself enough bread at times for days together, be the better for medicine?

About this time, a city missionary began to visit in the quiet little back-room. Feeling the old woman's privations, and knowing how ill her work was paid, how almost impossible it was for her to earn a living, he thought of getting the little orphan, now about ten years old, into an institution, where she would be well taught and cared for, and her feeble friend set free from the task of maintaining her. To his surprise, however, the offer was decidedly refused; nothing would induce her to part with "my Kitty." She met with a loss about this time. She was behind hand with a week's rent, and the landlady insisted upon her leaving. She took another small

room in the neighbourhood, paying for it a deposit of sixpence; but afterwards, having succeeded in getting up the arrears, she found it better to remain where she was; but the sixpence was lost, of course; forfeited. The landlady also made her enter into an agreement, that if ever she was a week behind again, she was to leave.

Things went on in this way for some while, until fever, that great sorrow of the poor, laid poor little Kitty on a sick-bed. Then she and her grandmother were left alone, for no one dared enter the room. Sarah was accustomed to be alone in the world; but the alarm spread, the neighbours got frightened, the landlady began to grumble, and insist upon the child being taken out of the house. Then Sarah's heart began to sink. "What should she do if her darling were taken away?" Perhaps some day, when the poor sick little one was left alone, she might come back and find her gone. Also there was another danger. For a day or two, she had not been able to get any work at the shop. The well-remembered agreement about the rent was hanging over her; any week that the two shillings should not be ready, what might become of her child? None but the *very* poor know of the troubles from Hand to Mouth, the life without a future, the life which puts by nothing.

One day when she was passing through Rosemary Lane, full of her sorrowful forebodings, she met the missionary. He comforted her as well as he could,

and persuaded her that such a thing could not, should not, be. He would come and see the child, he said. All honour to the City Missionaries! Who but they enter unhesitatingly into the abodes of noxious and pestilential disease? In what other class of men amongst us, are so many lives offered up to the duties of Christian sympathy with the sick and dying? The missionary went to the sick child, read the Bible, and prayed with her. In this case, however, his ministrations of comfort were not the only ones bestowed upon the little girl. The child had sent a message to her teachers, asking for their prayers, and telling of her sickness; and a kind friend had come in answer to comfort her. This kind friend also brought help of another sort, so that the terrors about the rent were averted for the present, and "my Kitty" in time got well.

And "my Kitty" and her grandmother were rich, notwithstanding the troubles of "from hand to mouth;" for the Scripture says, "If a man would give all the substance of his house for *love*, it would utterly be contemned."

London Life and Refuges.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOT POTATO WOMAN.

ALONE in her little room, in a small London street, sits a poor widow. Her old man has just left her, gone, as we hope, to his Father's house, and the poor old wife sits alone by her fire. She has numbered almost threescore years and ten, and may lift up her head with joy, and say with the prophet, "I thy servant have feared the Lord from my youth." Let the Lord's aged servant take comfort. He will never leave her or forsake her, neither shall she beg her bread; though, indeed, the having to earn a living, the age of labour being passed, is a subject which may well engage the widow's deepest consideration. She, however, is not without the connection and interest which belong as much to the honest labourer, as to the richest merchant in the city, and are as valuable a possession to the one as to the other. Her husband had been a labourer in the Tower; so the widow thinks, that as she would, by favour, be able to get admission there

she might earn an honest penny by selling hot potatoes, and other eatables, to the men at their dinner hour.

The first thing is to get the permission from the Tower authorities; this gained, she has next to purchase her stock in trade; nice tins to keep her potatoes and other delicacies hot on cold frosty days; good saucepans to cook them in; clean cloths to cover over the tin; perhaps, too, she may be able to get some little plates or dishes to serve them out in, being about to commence in a respectable and private way of business inside the Tower gates. Then all her skill in cooking will have to be put forth, to give her stock of eatables a good look, and appetising smell; her chief commodity, indeed, will be potatoes; but what housewife does not know how much of a potato's goodness depends upon its cook?

When the clock struck the dinner hour on the first day of trial, it was doubtless with an anxious heart that the widow entered the gates of the Tower. The venture was completely successful; the men were only allowed half-an-hour to eat their dinner; they had not time to go home, and denied the luxury of children's kisses, a comfortable fire, and a good dinner got ready by a tidy wife, our widow's delicacies came very acceptably before them; nay, even in summer time, the savoury morsels and the steaming potatoes did not look amiss. It was a thriving business; sometimes our widow earned fourpence a day, sometimes it even reached to sixpence. "Oh! but," says

our reader, "she could not live upon half-a-crown or even three shillings a week, and pay her rent and all." Certainly not; nor did we say this was the whole amount of the widow's income. On the contrary, it only kept her in food and clothes; the parish allowed her 1s. 6d. a week, which paid her rent, and a weekly loaf, which, we daresay, was all the bread she needed. A poor old woman was once bemoaning to us the prospect of the Union; not a Union, she said, in her native place, where she knew people, she would not so much have minded *that*, but at ——; and then she proceeded so sorrowfully to call up before us the picture of a large uniform, dismal dwelling, in a low, flat, damp country, far from all the friends and the scenes of her youth, that we began to think that removing the friendless, and aged poor, to their own parish, was some token of the wisdom of our ancestors. She had once been there for a little while. "And then," continued she, "I hadn't enough wittles, but," in a more patient tone, "I daresay 'twould be enough now."

Well, upon this sufficient income our widow continued to live very comfortably, and also—a very essential part of that comfort—to make a respectable appearance. On Sunday, she was as free, independent, and happy, as the first lady in the land; and on week-days too, when the labours of the day were over, she quietly took her place amongst those assembled to worship God in "spirit and in truth." Happy such a little service in the "upper chamber," and

most truly according with the spirit of the early Church.

Only a short time of our widow's pilgrimage now remained; five years were added to the threescore and ten; the prayers were almost ended, the everlasting praises were about to begin; but there was a little cloud of darkness still hanging over her latter days.

"A precarious subsistence;" who can tell the real meaning of these words, but those who have to earn their living? We do not exactly know where the "cool sequestered vale of life" may lie, but certainly not in the path of those who have to work for their daily bread. The day labourer is as subject to reverses as an absolute emperor—reverses quite as sudden, and to him quite as great. So it happened to our widow. A new law virtually abolished the sale of hot potatoes in the precincts of the Tower. It was enacted by the authorities, that the dinner-time should be extended to an hour; consequently, the men went to their homes to dinner; an alteration most just and needful, but fatal, good as it was, to the widow's trade.

She was in a great strait; there are few departments of honest industry open to an old woman of seventy-five. The first thing she thought of doing, was to ask help and provision from God. Her cause committed to Him, she then considered what step she should take. She thought an extra sixpence a week would be some help, and that she would apply to the parish for it. Alas! it is said, "misfortunes

never come singly;" but we are inclined to think, the meaning of this proverb may be found in the fact, that one misfortune often brings on another. Now, when the widow applied to the relieving officer, she doubtless told the story of her reverses; and he, choosing to conclude that such an aged person was quite unable to earn a living, not only refused the sixpence petitioned for, but cut off the whole allowance, and bade her "go into the house."

"Go into the house!" With these sad words sounding in her ears, the widow returned to her lonely attic, whither she had recently removed. "Go into the house!"—lie down in one of that long sad range of beds, tenanted by the aged and infirm, captives most of them by bodily weakness and failing powers, even during the day, to their bed-sides; henceforth to eat and drink, and sleep in public, and yet alone; for in the ward for the aged, the meals are brought in small tin dishes to the bedside of each of the inmates; to pass weary, monotonous, do-nothing days, amongst an assemblage of old women, incapable, for the most part, of any occupation; shut out from all the interests of life, and from all association, except with those for the most part as helpless and imbecile as themselves.* Worst grief of all, she would be obliged to bear with the companionship of the ungodly, of those to whom "the hoary head" is not "a

* We do not mean by these observations to reflect on the management of workhouses. In the best conducted workhouse, the ward for the aged is a melancholy sight.

crown of glory," not being found in the way of righteousness.

The widow looked round upon her humble possessions, and considered what she would part with to supply her present wants. She resolved to sell her wedding-ring and some sheets. "Oh!" she said to her friend the missionary when he called, "if the clergyman were but here, who first received me as a communicant, my friend through so many, many years, he would be my friend now." The poor widow had moved into strange lodgings, and had not even a kind neighbour to help or comfort her. At last she reflected that the overseer was a superior authority to the relieving officer; the overseer she knew, and as he lived not very far off, she resolved to tell him her story. The overseer heard it with pity, and the allowance was restored. He would not, however, grant the additional sixpence; and the allowance having been stopped for four weeks, there must have been a consequent accumulation of debt and difficulty. Besides, the 1s. 6d. only paid the rent, and the one loaf was not sufficient for the week's food. What else could she sell?

Well, there was something belonging to her which she knew would fetch a good price. But, then, it was such a favourite, and such a companion! Day and night she would feel so lonesome without it. It was her clock. Those only who have lived alone in a house, can estimate the companionable qualities of a clock; some voice, not our own, to speak to us by

night and by day. But people must eat, and the clock was sold; fifteen shillings it fetched, so it must have been a good clock. This supply lasted some time, but food is a daily want, and every day the stock of money diminished.

Could anything be saved out of the rent? Well, yes; there was an old friend of hers, not much better off than herself, and by sharing a room with her, the widow could save ninepence per week; but then she would be obliged to sell all her own furniture. With a heavy heart she went to the broker's. A home is a home, if it be but an attic; and to sell her furniture was to give up all hope of a home for the rest of her days. It was the will of God; she had no other comfort. Walking sorrowfully along, returning from the broker's, she met a Christian friend. Struck by her sad look, this friend walked along by her side, and listened to her tale of troubles. He went home with her, up into the attic. "Well," he said, "I will allow you half a crown for eight weeks, and here is the first to begin with." So saying, he laid it on the table, and then added, "Here are two shillings more for the present time, to revive your heart."

The widow dropped a few silent tears. "It is the Lord who has sent it," thought she. Then turning to her visitor, and anxious to shew her gratitude, she put into his hands a good copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress," in a large type.

"No," said her visitor; "you can see to read this. I cannot take it; but if you die before me, and like

to leave it to me, I will accept it, and keep it for your sake."

The widow's heart sang for joy. Perhaps she thought that, at threescore and fifteen years, she need not look far beyond the horizon of eight weeks; or rather, perhaps, the aged helpless Christian rested on the promise—"Lahai-roi, Jehovah Jireh"—"Thou God seest me!" "Thou wilt provide!"

The promise was fulfilled. A lady of rank, who read the story,* pensioned the widow to the amount of half-a-crown per week; so that, with her allowance, a trifling amount she still makes by selling vegetables, and her pension, the widow, we trust, will serve as an example to those who know her, of the unfailing truth of the words—"Yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread."

* Reported in our Magazine, now the *Coral Missionary Magazine*, Nisbet & Co. The case was mentioned in the journal of the Missionary on the Blue Anchor Yard District, Rag Fair, September 1859.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE TRAMP.

BESIDE a little fire, in a poor man's home in Rag Fair, sat a husband and wife, in talk over present misery and future difficulties. Perhaps the reader will join the humble talk, and see if he can give any advice to the sufferers.

The man was Irish; his wife had been religiously brought up; yes, even in the depths of Rag Fair, where the greater part of her life had been spent. They had four little children. Both the man and wife were employed in some part of the process of the manufactory of tobacco. For five long months the husband had been out of work; but the woman being engaged in the same business, her little earnings supported them for a time. Only partially, however; in addition to what she earned, they were obliged to get money, by pawning, first one thing and then another, of their little possessions. Now a greater affliction had fallen upon them; the wife was very ill; twice before she had been in an hospital, and

was only partially restored; now she was ill again, and unable to work for her children. What was to be done?

We suppose the reader, if sitting beside that little fire, would say, "Go to the workhouse;" but how much more easy it is *to say* than *to do!* The unhappy invalid would miss, not indeed the comforts, for there were none, but the freedom of her home, and the prattle of her children; the mother and children must be parted in the workhouse; we do not find fault with the arrangement, it is probably a necessary one, we only sympathise with the sorrow.

Then there was another trouble, harder still to get over, for the poor are used to control their feelings; what was to become of their furniture? Her sister would take in the bed, so that would be safe; but then the tables and chairs and the other things? A countryman of his own, the husband thought, would take in these, and might be trusted to take care of them.

Long and anxious was the talk. "It's only for you and the children for awhile," said the husband; he was young and strong, and could not give up, at any rate, the hopes of getting work; when his sick wife and the children had shelter and food, he thought he could provide for himself.

So, at last, it was settled. The bed, the chairs, the table, the kettle, &c., were all conveyed to safe places, and the husband and wife parted; she went with her children to the workhouse; he, to a distance to find

work; he to tramp lonely, and hungry, and sad, along the road; she, to lie down in sorrowful publicity in the workhouse ward.

In the sick monotony of her weary life, there would be no change; we will therefore follow the steps of the husband and father. He tramped the whole way on foot till he reached Birmingham, where he arrived with the additional misfortune of having worn out his shoes. Here, he seems to have had a few friends, and got a little work; it was only an occasional job, however, not enough to live upon. It was September when he started, and winter was now coming on; a hard time to be out of work.

So he took to the road again, to make a tramping tour to some of the great northern towns, and try in them for work. It is sad, in the country lanes, on the banks by the side of the path, and in the broad roads leading from great cities, to pass such wayfarers; the man asleep on the wet ground, with his bundle under his head, and his stick by his side, the woman watching beside him; or the husband, followed by the wife, carefully carrying her thin, half-famished infant in her arms, with two or three ragged little ones toddling after. Sometimes such people are vagrants—beggars by profession, who gain their scanty and wretched livelihood in a dishonest manner. Too often, however, we fear they are among the honest and deserving poor, out of work, and tramping about from place to place in the hopes of getting some. For the time being, however, they

are houseless and miserable vagabonds, and obliged to keep company with the same. We doubt not our readers may remember passing many such, who asked for nothing, and yet whose worn, haggard, and hungry looks, half tempted them to offer the help which was unasked for. Not that it should be so; a man who receives an alms upon a highway, has made one step from honest poverty to vagrancy.

It was now December, dark, wet, and gloomy. Poor James Nellor was still *upon the tramp;* and many were the miserable adventures he met with. One night he slept at a lodging-house; his fellow-lodgers were a man and his wife, persons of the sort described above, idle and vicious, who live by begging. They had some food in a basket, and were getting their supper. The man asked James Nellor what his trade was? James answered; and then said to the man, "Are you a navvy?" "No," said the man; "I was one, but begging is a better trade." James Nellor was no beggar, but even coppers were getting few, and the driest crust and the most wretched shelter must be paid for. One night, when he was on the tramp to Manchester, some one in the house where he slept told him, that near at hand was the house of a nobleman who gave all poor travellers, applying for it, a pound of bread, a pound of beef, and a pint of beer. Now this would be a great help. James Nellor, as we have said, was no beggar, but to accept a provision made for poor travellers was [redacted]ght; and he determined to knock

at the gate on the morrow. Accordingly, on the morrow, when he had walked to the distance at which he thought, from description, the house must be, he inquired of a man, coming along in a cart from the opposite direction, for the place. "Why, you are a mile and a half, or two miles beyond it!" exclaimed the man. This was bad news; but a good meal was such a tempting prospect, that James half thought he would turn back. The carter persuaded him to do so; he was going that way himself, he said, and would direct him. So James Nellor turned back.

At length they came to the gate leading from the road to the mansion, and James went in; many feelings passed through the man's breast, as he walked up to the house. He had never begged before, he reflected, except from persons in his own trade; but, was this begging? What should he say, when he knocked at the door? At last he did knock, and the door was opened by a servant. "Is it true," he inquired, "that poor tramps are relieved, that is, that they get refreshment when they call here?" "Yes; when the master is at home," was the reply, "but he is in London now." So saying, the door was shut, and James Nellor was left outside.

Tired and dispirited, he set out again on his weary tramp, only more tired and more hungry than before. The wintry morning, and short afternoon passed away, and night was again coming on. The night was cold and frosty; poor James, as he was going on, felt a sharp and sudden pain in his leg; he was seized with

rheumatism. He walked on with considerable pain, until he came to a small, lone public-house, where he applied for a night's lodging; it was refused him. At a little distance stood a few cottages, the only dwellings within many miles. Could he find shelter there? This was very doubtful; but pain and distress made him resolve to try. As he was dragging himself along, feeling he could go no further, he chose out the warmest and driest spot he could find, under the hedge, where he determined to lie down and pass the night, in case he could gain no admission at the cottages. He knocked at a door, which was opened by a collier's wife. The woman was struck by the appearance of suffering on his face. "You seem to be very tired," she said, "I will try to make you a bed on the floor." How thankfully it was accepted we need not record. "Oh!" said poor James afterwards, "I should have died that night if I could not have got shelter."

Next morning, comforted with the warmth and rest of the night, he was better, and able to start on the tramp again. After a time, he reached Manchester; but no work was to be had there. Disappointed at Manchester, he set out for Liverpool; still the same ill success; no work there. His money and strength were now alike exhausted; but some of his own trade, pitying his distress, made a small collection for him; it only amounted to three-and-sixpence; but it enabled him to return to Birmingham, where he thankfully settled down for a time to his

occasional employment. He even managed to send his wife as much as fifteen shillings.

So passed the winter; then the spring returned. James, still having only occasional work, resolved to go back to London, and try again there. His sister, a widow, with four little children, kept a small shop in London. Arrived there, he went to her; he knew she would help him as much as she could, and she did. She gave him permission every night to sleep under the counter. After a few weeks' seeking, he at length got work. The wages, indeed, were very small, but the work was constant. Now he might have a little home again; but, alas, there was no wife to make him one! She had been removed to an hospital, and his little children left alone in the workhouse. They were better there; for what was a poor lone man to do with four little children? The parish officers, however, hearing the father had returned and had obtained work, insisted upon his taking the charge of the children. In vain did James beg that, under the circumstances, they might remain a little longer in the workhouse; his plea could not be listened to. A poor friend came to his relief, who had visited the wife during her sickness, and who now offered a room on the ground-floor, in her own house, for the use of the father and his children. After a while the mother came out of the hospital, and returned to take a feeble charge of her husband and her little ones. Perhaps the small room might have worn some air of comfort, and the

place where they were, have looked like a home once more; but when they called on the neighbour who had taken charge of their furniture, it was all gone! sold! lost!—gone for ever from them! Only the bed, of which the sister had taken charge, remained.

"The poor mother," says the missionary in his journal, "is sometimes better and sometimes worse. One day I find her in bed; and the next time I call, she is out. They have only one chair and a small table, probably not their own, as their landlady lends them some necessary articles. Their only covering at night is their clothes."

Hard thoughts of God and of His providence contributed further to depress the afflicted woman. The missionary soothed, comforted, and instructed her, shewing her how impossible it was for her to judge of God's dealings with man, and of how certainly the greatest sorrows would turn to blessings, if borne in submission to His will.

He was a welcome visitor, the missionary, in that humble room. The wife smiled and praised his tracts. The husband was persuaded to go to the little meeting in the school-room to hear the word of God. He had been brought up a Romanist, but was inclined to hear the truth. "Do you know," he once said to the missionary, "what I would do for the good of Ireland, if I had the power. I would teach all the Irish *mothers* to read, and that would do away in time with all ignorance and superstition."

There is a sorrowful cloud in the future still hanging over this home in Rag Fair. The mother follows her little ones about with her eye; the youngest she most fears for, as there is no fender, it was one of the things taken from them; it makes her think when she goes into the hospital again, and she feels as though time cannot be far distant, who is to take care of her children?*

* We are thankful to be able to say, that a few kind friends gave some assistance to this family. We publish these *true* narratives, to shew to those interested in the welfare of the labouring poor, the sort of difficulties with which they have to contend.

CHAPTER III.

"LOSING YOUR FOOTING."

IT is one of the trials of the poor, that the accidents of life affect them more deeply than they do persons of a better class. We do not, by the word "accidents," mean to imply chance events, in the existence of which we do not believe, but only those sudden and unforeseen afflictions from the effects of which, when they fall upon a labouring man, he can never, perhaps, in the course of a long life, escape. They who live from hand to mouth walk always, as regards their temporal concerns, on the edge of a precipice, and sometimes, when once they lose their footing, they can never regain it. This is one of the considerations which should prevail with us, to consider tenderly the case of the honest, destitute, and aged poor. The story of Philip Quen, the sailor, is an exemplification of the danger of a poor man's losing his footing on the ladder of life.

It was blowing great guns; a tremendous sea

swept from time to time the deck of a vessel trembling in the grasp of the waves, which were roaring in the stormy channel between England and Ireland. It was the "Cuba," bound for Waterford, twenty-nine hands on board, and twenty-nine living hearts aghast at the circumstances of danger and terror around them. The force of the water had burst through the dead-light, smashed to pieces the two life-boats and the jolly-boat, and the sea was now pouring into the vessel, tossing about the heavy articles on board as dead leaves are tossed in the wind. Twenty or thirty times had the men been driven from the pumps.

Night came on; the surging of the water and the roaring of the wind were the only sounds to be heard, as an old seaman, Philip Quen, ascended the ladder which led to the poop. "Who goes there?" said the captain. "Philip Quen." "Philip," continued the captain, "you are an old and experienced seaman; is there anything else which you think might be done?" "Nothing, sir," replied Philip, "but to take to the boats;" and the old seaman continued on his way to the poop. He knew that nothing would save the vessel; and oppressed with a sense of past sins and present danger, thinking, too, of his wife and little ones in a dark alley of London, he had come to pray. "Father of mercies, save us," he said; "spare us yet a little while, and I will think of Thee." Suddenly he came in contact, in the dark, with one of his mates. "What are you

doing here?" he asked in surprise. "I came here to pray," said the man. "So did I," answered Philip; "and now let us be up and at it." So saying, he hastened to the boats. Of these only two remained, the other three having been swept away by the sea.

Into the foaming waves, seething like a boiling cauldron, the storm still raging in the blackness of the night, the men proceeded to lower the smaller of the two boats. To lower a boat in a tempest is of course a difficult and dangerous undertaking; and the eyes of the men were fastened on the boat as, dimly visible, it slowly swung over the side of the vessel, and every heart rejoiced when, just as it touched the water, the hooks at either end gave way at the same moment, and it was tossed up and down the gigantic waves in safety. Cautiously the men descended into the boat, until it held thirteen of them. "No more," cried some voices in the ship, "that boat is full." Among its crew were the mate and Philip Quen. "God have mercy on your souls," said the mate to those whom they were leaving, and who were preparing the larger boat, in which to follow them, "and do the best you can." In a few minutes the rising mountains of water hid the vessel from their sight for ever!

There was small chance of escape. In the fury of the storm, the darkness of the night, and the violence of the gale, could such a boat live? About half the number of the men threw themselves down in the bottom of the boat in despair. The remainder,

full of hope and courage, nerved themselves to overcome, by the help of God, the dangers which menaced them. Of these, one of the greatest was the rush of the water into the boat. This the mate and Philip endeavoured to bale out, the one with his "south-wester," the other with his boot; at the same time encouraging their comrades, who were endeavouring to urge on the boat with their oars. But a heavy sea struck the oar, first from the hand of one man, then from that of another; however, they had six oars, so that four were still in use. Night still continued; at length, the morning dawned; and, with the morning came renewed hope; more welcome still, than morning in the sick room of the dying, is daylight to the shipwrecked sailor. Nothing, however, was to be seen, except the foaming waters, the leaden sky, and the sea-gulls, birds of the storm, whirling over head.

Hour after hour passed; and, at length, one of the men called out, "A sail!" All eyes were turned to it. "I see it," exclaimed one; "and I," cried another. "Up with the flag-staff!" This was a long pole at the bottom of the boat, which, with the handkerchiefs tied to the end, was used for a signal. At the news, the despairing sufferers, lying in the water at the bottom of the boat, rose up, and joined their efforts to those of their comrades. Still, hour after hour passed away, and the sail, though still in view, was not reached. The strength of the men began to give way; the bearer of the flag-staff laid himself down to

rest, when the boat descended into the deep valleys of water, and raised it again when the boat was again lifted on the height of the waves. They had now been sixteen hours on the sea, without food of any kind.

The crew of the schooner, whose sail was thus anxiously watched, had seen floating by, what appeared to be a ship's safe and skylight. They, therefore, thought it possible that a vessel had gone down, and would not lightly abandon the search for the shipwrecked mariners. The schooner continued to hover about; for nine days the captain had not seen the sun; he had been about to turn his ship, but he forbore a little longer; that little longer—our boat was saved! The men stretched themselves, in their wet clothes, on the bare boards under the deck; "the best bed," said Philip, "I ever laid my bones upon in all my life before. Thou art worth thy weight in gold," said he to the little boat, which the captain had taken on board; if I was but a rich man, I would take thee home."

Philip and his comrade had not forgotten their prayer. They promised to each other, on board the schooner, that they would go to church, and return thanks to God, the first Sunday they should be on shore. The sailors were landed on the coast of Ireland; a charitable pittance enabled them to reach their several homes. There was happiness in the little dark room, in Rag Fair, that night when the sailor-father arrived; but poor Philip, though over-

joyed to return to his wife and children, had lost his all.

What was this *all?* A few pounds in money, some articles he had purchased and was bringing home, and his outfit. This last was the greatest loss of all; without his outfit he could not take another berth; and what was to become of his wife and children? Nevertheless, as the days passed on, and nothing was heard of the other boat, Philip and his wife felt more and more thankful for his deliverance.

Opposite to him in Rag Fair lived two of his comrades; and, on the first Sunday morning, he knocked, ready for church, at their doors. One was ready; one was not. In company with the one who was ready, Philip went to church, to offer his thanksgiving to God.

But Monday came, and with it Monday's troubles. How often it happens that when we have received any great gift at the hands of God, we yet find our trust fail in smaller troubles! "Having eyes, ye see not," said our Lord to His doubting disciples; "and having ears, hear ye not, and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?" From the roaring of the sea, and the horror of the storm, God had saved the poor seaman's life, and could He not provide for his daily need? Philip, nevertheless, was in sad straits. He could not find bread for his family; and even more than bread did

he need an outfit; it was his means of living. Every day made the family poorer and poorer, as every day they sacrificed something for their subsistence. Still they were patient; the husband and the father was saved. How little do we know of the patience of poverty! "I mind nothing at all," said Philip, "about what I've lost, I've such inward satisfaction. I'll never despair of God's help."

Some men were once in danger of being drowned in a river; their safety depended upon their strength holding out until they could swim to the bank, which was lying dark and silent at some distance from them. Encouraged by the hope of safety, the men put forth all their strength; it was almost too far, but still they hoped to gain it. As they came near they perceived the darkness was not land, but the shadow of a rock in the water; the land itself was lying some distance yet beyond, not so far, however, but that, having attained this spot, they might yet reach it. They struck out again, and reached it; the shadow of that rock had saved their lives. It had given them hope.

It was hope in God, and a courageous determination to do his duty, which had helped to save Philip Quen in the shipwreck. It was hope in God, and the same courageous determination, which helped him through the weary days of want and suffering in his poor room at home.

After a time Philip Quen got a berth again, but he could not replace his outfit nor recover his for-

mer position. He is still hoping on, and struggling to maintain his wife and children in their house in Rag Fair; but, without any fault of his, he has "lost his footing," and, as yet, he has not been able to regain it.

CHAPTER IV.

HOME WORK AMONG THE POLICE.

WE often think how strange a scene to many of us would be the London streets at night! The very places we are most familiar with by day, with their glittering shops and crowded thoroughfares, we should scarcely know by night. Few people, perhaps, are aware how much missionary work there is to do in the London streets after dark, and how much is done by the City Mission. It is the city missionary who goes after midnight from one low public-house to another, carrying to the outcasts, whom he finds assembled there, the message of warning and of love. It is the city missionary who walks the streets with the policeman, sometimes at two or three o'clock in the morning, trying to familiarise himself with the duties, troubles, and temptations of his hearer. "One day," says the missionary to the police, "I gave a constable a tract, with my name marked on it. As soon as he saw what it was, he took off his hat, and raising the lining, drew forth a

tract, which he handed to me, saying, 'Did you give me that, sir?' 'I have no doubt of it, but I do not recollect.' 'Perhaps you will, sir, when I tell you, that one night, as St Paul's clock struck twelve, you laid your hand on my arm, and said, 'My friend, if you should die before that clock strikes again, where would your soul be?' He then told me that that question set him thinking. He found that he had no well-grounded hope for eternity, became deeply anxious, read the Bible, prayed, and attended a place of worship; some person, whom he met there, took great interest in his case; and now when, after the lapse of some months, I met him again, he could say, in answer to the question I put to him at our first meeting, 'I trust I should be with Christ in glory!'"

We have stated, in a former chapter, that we think missionaries to villages and small county towns ought to *itinerate*. One of the great difficulties encountered by an earnest and conscientious clergyman, in such localities, is the *sameness* of his work. In London, the case is entirely different; among the extreme poor, especially, their very migratory habits makes a difficulty of an opposite kind; among all classes of labouring men there, it may be said, the work is always new. This is especially the case as regards the police. In July 1856, the total number of men in the force was 5817; during the four years preceding that date, 1276 men were dismissed, and 4407 resigned, died, or were pensioned. It only required 134 more men to have left during those

few years, to have made the number of new men equal to the whole number of the police. The changes averaging 1150 per annum, it must consequently, at all times be, to a great extent, a new police force. Some leave the London force, because they are appointed to duty in the country; some, concerning whom the missionary has begun to hope, leave because they cannot bear the raillery of their comrades; some, because they cannot have a portion of the Sabbath to themselves; some emigrate. "I sometimes seem," says the missionary, "almost to envy those who can gather their little bands together, and say, These are 'the children God has given me;' but God has largely blessed me in my work, and when I get to heaven, I *shall* know how many He has given me."

Sometimes people speak of a missionary, as though he were interfering with the work of the clergy; as though, where the clergy are diligent and faithful, there were no room for a missionary. Whereas the work is different; the business of a missionary is to acquaint himself familiarly with each individual in his district. The duties and business of a parish render this impossible to the most zealous clergyman. "I once spent an evening," says the same missionary, "with the popular clergyman of a wealthy parish. I knew he held a service at the station, so I asked him about it. He spoke of the men as respectful and attentive. 'Do they ever speak to you?' I said. 'Oh dear, no!' 'Nor you to them, except in conducting the service?' 'No.' I then

told him how I worked. 'Oh,' said he, 'we cannot get at them in that way; you have the advantage over us, you stand on the same footing with themselves.'"

"I told him how I worked;" and *how* does he work? His office is to visit the policemen at the stations and section-houses, at their homes, at the police courts, in short, wherever he can, without interfering with their duties. At the stations, he regularly holds meetings for the purpose of religious instruction. In the drill seasons he follows the drill sergeant, and getting to the station just before the drill closes, persuades the men to stay to a short service; sometimes he meets them on their parade ground, or in the mess-kitchen, where all the unmarried men have their meals together, or in the way to and from, or at Bow Street; but his influence is chiefly acquired by the kind familiar intercourse, which mixes itself with the home-life of each person, by the teaching which has respect to the individual, not only as a man and a policeman, but as a husband —a father—a friend; which extends itself to all the circumstances of his daily life, in his home as well as on his beat.

"When I enter a dirty, untidy dwelling," says the missionary, speaking of such home visits, "I always suspect there is something very wrong either in the man or his wife, and I am not often mistaken. Calling once at a house to see a sick man, I heard there was another policeman living in the same house, so

I went up to his room. I did not like the appearance of the place, everything was so untidy. Though the man had come off duty at six o'clock in the morning, and had had breakfast as soon as he came home, yet the things were still on the table. Some dirty clothes were lying about, as if looked up for washing; all seemed bad. I at once came to the conclusion that one, or both the dwellers there, was a friend to the publican. In a few minutes the wife came in, and I saw her slip something which looked very like a bottle into a corner. I began to talk to them about the place, and said their home led me to suppose they did not love God. I saw by their looks at each other that they each suspected the other had told me something; however, I set that matter right, and after a little talk with them, they began to blame each other for drinking, and neglecting to take care of home. Cases of this kind *were* common, *now* they are rare, there is a great change in the home and family throughout the force generally."

There was one man to whom the missionary had often spoken in vain. At length he left the force, and the missionary heard no more of him. Sauntering by a churchyard one day, this man's eye fell upon a tombstone, inscribed with a text, which the missionary had once dwelt upon at one of his meetings at the station, as having given comfort to a dying man. He began to consider, to ask himself what good he had ever got by what he had heard? "So

he took to religion," as one of his comrades said. He now felt anxious concerning his soul, and set about reforming his life. But it would not do; at length he was driven to the only refuge, and found peace and joy in Jesus Christ. Meeting the missionary in after years, when he had become a truly Christian man, he told him that those words spoken by him in the meeting at the station were the means of leading him to God.

There was another, a careless, wild young fellow, belonging to the force, who never would listen to any religious instruction. He had been several times reported for misconduct, and at length resigned to save himself from being dismissed, Having resigned, he ceased to be under the missionary's charge, and he heard no more of him, until one day, being told that a policeman was lying sick in an hospital, he went to visit him, and found, to his surprise, his former acquaintance, as wild and reckless as ever. He had returned only a short time before to the police force, and been hurt in a fray when on duty. When he left the hospital the missionary obtained a promise from him that he would abstain from drink; this promise he kept for a little time, but soon became a drunkard again. At length, brought low by extreme poverty and disease, he began to think of the future. It was a thought, however, full of bitterness to him; all his sins seemed to be set before him in fearful array, and no way of escape could he see. When told of the Lord Jesus, he said he had so often blas-

phemed His holy name, he could not look for mercy there. At last it pleased God to bless the word spoken by the missionary, and the promises of God found an entrance to his heart. He made a public profession of his faith by uniting himself to the people of God, and continued stedfast in his Christian calling.

"The Lord sent a word unto Jacob, and it lighted upon Israel." Jane was a young servant girl, the daughter of a policeman, She "walked," as the saying is, with a young man, who persuaded her to go with him of an evening to dancing-places. As she could not get leave to go out often enough to please herself and her admirer, at his entreaties, she gave notice to leave, and took a lodging until she could obtain another place. Among the young girls who fall into evil, the large proportion who have been domestic servants is an appalling consideration; but it does not wholly originate in bad mistresses or bad places. One great cause is, that the young girls, from the mere fact of getting their own living, are too early set free from parental control, and no other is substituted for it; it is a fact seldom recognised by either party, that the mistress holds, for the time being, in some sense, the place of a mother. Many a lady will say, "Provided my servants do their work well, I do not trouble myself any further!" A very un-Christian mode of reasoning in one whose absolute [redacted] of God, is, to "look well to the [redacted]hold," whatever her domestic cir-

cumstances may be; and it ought to be inculcated, as a duty on young females, to submit to the control of their mistress. For no office are women missionaries more needed, than to watch over that class from whence come our domestic servants. We think that such a mission would bear the same relation to the Rescue Society, as the Refuge does to the Reformatory. Jane was a respectable girl; she did not intend to do more than gratify her love of pleasure. Evening after evening, she went out with her lover; but she always returned home in good time. At length, one evening, she stayed and stayed, until he persuaded her it was too late to return, and she knew it was; but she would not go home with him. "Then what would she do?" She did not know. She wandered about with him from street to street, wearied, frightened, and miserable. At length she suddenly caught sight of her father, the policeman. We need not say how glad the father was to rescue his child. He could not be prevailed upon to let her go to service again; he determined that she should learn some business, the work of which could be done at home, and at home he kept her. A year or two passed away, and the father was taken ill. His illness was very long, and, of course, the missionary visited him continually; but his visits and instructions were very coldly received. At length, his recovery being hopeless, he was pensioned, and the missionary went to pay his farewell call, and take leave of him, with rather a heavy

heart. Sitting behind her father, he saw the daughter, weeping. He was about to speak to her, when she made signs to him to take no notice; and when he left she followed him out of the room. On questioning her, he found, to his surprise and joy, that his visits to the man, which had seemed so hopeless, had been blest to the daughter, who heard him as she sat at work in an adjoining room. She had felt too timid to speak to him on the subject; but thinking this was the last time she should see him, she found courage to address him. It was *not* the last time; for though the man was dismissed, the missionary, under these circumstances, continued to visit the family. He was surprised and delighted to find how much Jane knew of religious truth; how gently, and yet how certainly, the Lord had led her, by means of his instructions, on the narrow way. She soon obtained confidence to make an open confession of her faith, and her sweet influence appeared to gain constantly on her suffering father, until he, too, seemed not far from the kingdom of God.

One man left the force during the war in the Crimea, having volunteered to join the Commissariat at Varna. On his return, being questioned about his religious privileges, he replied, "O, sir, how many times have I longed to be back in the Library, hearing one of your discourses!—the thought of dying abroad was dreadful." An officer lately said, at a public meeting, that "he was in the Crimea during the first winter the army was there; and he

might safely say, that if the chaplain of the division to which he was attached was enabled to attend to the burials of the men, it was quite as much as he could do."*

"Oh!" said another man, "I am so happy, I feel as if I could stop the people in the streets, and tell them what God has done for my soul." Nor was this the mere outburst of enthusiasm; he continued to walk in the ways of the Lord; his mind expanded, and he learned to live as one who feels that he has an immortal soul, which is to dwell with God for ever. This man was more than fifty years old, when he was first led to think of his Saviour. He soon after left the force, his time of service having expired.

Sometimes the men will remain behind after a meeting, to speak to the missionary. Once a backslider, whose heart was touched, in some of the night services, meeting a neighbour, who was also a policeman, and had been with him to the same service, was asked by him, "What he thought of the discourse the other night?" This question led them to compare thoughts; a third man joining them, they agreed together to take the first opportunity of speaking to the missionary, which they accordingly did, staying behind for that purpose.

"I'm a persecuted woman," said a religious person to him one day, "my husband persecutes me sadly on account of my religion." "Does he?" said the missionary, "but perhaps you are one of those who

* General Laurence's speech at Bath, 7th March 1860.

have no word of encouragement for the unconverted?" This seemed to the woman a just reproof; the next time she saw the missionary she said, "She had prayed and striven against her error, and she thought she had succeeded, for the other day, she heard her husband say to one of the children, 'Why, mother's better tempered than she was; I declare home is getting comfortable.'" She now leads, where she tried to drive, and the home is happy.

"My old woman wants to see you," was the message brought one day by an aged policeman to the missionary. Upon calling at the time appointed, he found that, if the old woman *did* want to see him, the old man was equally anxious. They were quite a simple couple, and it seemed that the man had taken home as much as he could remember of what he had heard at the meetings, and they had talked it over and over, till they began to feel that they had only heard enough to make them long for more. With child-like simplicity they received the word, and began to feel something of the comfort of Divine love; the woman advanced the quickest, but the man seemed to have a happy sense of the love of God. Wishing to try whether the woman was indeed resting wholly on Christ, the missionary, one day, asked her, "if she thought she should ever be good enough to get to heaven?" She looked at him earnestly. "Good enough?" said she, "why, sir, I never had any goodness, and I am sure I seem to have less *every day*; if God does not give me heaven till I get

myself good enough, I shall never get there; but you read to us, 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Ah! sir, that's the comfort!" Months passed away, and the missionary never had reason to doubt of their having experienced that comfort. They have now joined the people of God in Church fellowship.

There was one man, the son of a brickburner, in the country; he was ill-treated by his father, and turned out of doors, when a child, to get his living as he could. The boy came up to London, riding, for a good part of the way, on the chains which hung under the road waggons. Arrived in London, he entered upon the disreputable calling of a tramp. One day he saw a horse run away, and succeeded in stopping it. The grateful owner took him into his service, and as he conducted himself well, after a few years he got him a place in the police force. He was a steady, moral man, but far from God; in fact, he had a quarrel against God, for a supposed wrong; one after another, every one of his children had died before it was a year old; one, a sweet little fellow, alone was left, and as he was eleven months old, the father felt secure, but before the birthday came round, the child was taken. Into this desolate home the missionary came with comfort and instruction, meet for the angry and wounded spirit; the word of God prevailed, and after a time the father acknowledged the sovereignty of the Lord. "This seemed a sort of turning-point," observes the missionary; "they were led, both the man

and his wife, to think; they invited me to their house, and eagerly sought instruction. I had to teach the man as if he had been still a child; but as he learned, his mind expanded, his spirit became humble, and he strove earnestly to obtain a sense of forgiveness. The wife advanced more quickly and quietly, as is generally the case, but they each looked to Christ alone; they rested on Him, and found peace; they may not be *bright* Christians, but I believe they are *real* ones."

"Grandfather!" said a child at the station to an aged policeman, holding in his little hand a tract, at which he was looking very intently, "Grandfather! do you love Jesus?" It was a home thrust, and the man tried to evade it; the child persisted; "but *do* you, grandfather, because this book says, if you *don't*, you won't go to heaven." For ten years the old man had attended the meetings, and heard the gospel, but now the spark was struck. He went to the missionary. "Tell me of Jesus, sir, I want to know about Him. I want to love Him."

Sitting by the side of a sick policeman, the missionary once found his poor blind mother; at the sound of his voice she started up, stretched out her hands towards him, and clasping his, exclaimed, "Dear, blessed man! if it had not been for you, my soul would have been as dark as my body is!" As in the story of Jane, it had happened, that "the Lord sent a word unto Jacob and it lighted upon Israel." The missionary having formerly attended this man

through a long sickness, the reading, conversation, prayers, dropped into the heart of the mother; she had not then lost her eyesight. She attended the means of grace, sought pardon through Christ, and found peace in believing. It was, indeed, "something laid up for a rainy day."

"A volume of tracts was lying on a little side table," we are quoting now from the missionary's journal. "I was pleased to see them bound and carefully covered, as they had all been received from me; on one was written, 'Johnny's Book.' 'What does that mean?' I said. 'Oh, sir, Johnny loved that book so much, he had it in his hand when he died;' it was The Young Cottager!"

* * * * * *

"'Excuse me, sir, but is what you have just said quite true?'"

"It has been uttered as the truth of God, and I believe I have not said a word which I cannot prove from Scripture; but what in particular do you allude to?"

"Well, is it true that sin can be so completely taken away, that a man may know it for a certainty?"

"Yes; thousands have realised it."

"Then they must be happy people!"

The inquirer was a Romanist; the occasion, an address just concluded, on "Justification by Faith."

* * * * * *

Grumble—grumble—a man went on scolding the police authorities for having done nothing towards the missionary's support, scolding the men because they

had not set any proper value on what had been such a blessing to the force—the labours of the missionary. "I think you are looking at the wrong side," said the latter, "for last year I had 25,000 hearers present at my different services; I did not, however, see you among them?"

"No; business often prevented that."

"During the year several men were brought to a knowledge of the truth and gave their hearts to God, but you are not on my list as one?"

"There, there, don't go any further. I have got the worst this time, but do give me a call next time you come this way. I must be gone now."

"But stop, there is one other matter. How much a year do *you* give to the support of the police missionary?"

"Dear, bless me! My clerk has left one of his papers behind; I must despatch it immediately. Good bye; give me a call soon."

Great numbers of the men purchase Bibles when once they begin to know the value of such. At one time 400 of the men subscribed each for a family Bible, the price of which was one guinea. Books of prayers are also asked for, for the purpose of introducing family worship. On these occasions, the missionary frequently goes to offer the first prayer amidst the gathered household, as to make a beginning, is always the most difficult part. One man said he had long wished to do so, but feared the opposition of his wife, until she entered the room where

he had knelt down to pray alone, as was his custom before going out on his night duty. "I don't think you are right, she said; "if you need to pray for yourself, I am sure you need to pray for me and the children."

"I do pray for you."

"Then why don't you pray *with* us?"

"My husband is a true Christian," said the woman afterwards to the missionary, "he does everything he can to make us comfortable; but I *do* wish he would talk to us more about religion."

It is the pictures of home missionary work among the police which we have principally endeavoured to set before our readers. We might enlarge the same, and shew the missionary at the station-house by the side of the apprehended prisoner, endeavouring to instruct, or awaken the conscience, to soothe the unhappy girl just rescued from the water, or bring some other guilty individual to repentance. We might shew him detecting the Mormonite in the force, and staying his evil influence. We might shew him at his weekly meeting, held night after night, at the different section-houses, urging the message of salvation upon his hearers; and the policeman on his beat, very late at night, recalling the words, and striving to draw nigh unto God. But it is chiefly in the number of Bibles subscribed for, the home made happy, the family prayer begun, the hope of salvation awakened in sickness, or, what is better far, in health, that we have chiefly endeavoured to shew

his great usefulness. We wish, also, to point out to our readers, both in the case of the police, and also in that of the cabmen,* the great advantage of having missionaries whose work is among particular classes of working men. It is to this, as well as to the system of house-to-house visitation, that we owe the multitude of plans for the advantage of working people, whose source has been in the labours of the London City Mission. The missionary becomes acquainted with the peculiar troubles, wants, and temptations of particular classes and the causes of them, and then, finding ready aid from those who have influence and authority, he is able to lessen them. Let us take, for an example, the establishment of the mess kitchens in the police force. The following is the account given of it in the missionary's journal:—

"The section-houses, where the single men live, were formerly filthy places. One common kitchen served for cooking, eating, smoking, and brushing clothes; and was, in fact, the only place where men could attend to anything they had to do at home. They had no other room except their bedroom, and they were not allowed to be there except at certain hours. *Now*, every section-house is kept thoroughly clean, and beside the kitchen there are washing and cleaning rooms, and a room called the library, kept on purpose for the use of those who wish to read or write. Newspapers and books are provided. Formerly, when men came off duty at two o'clock, they

* See Sins of the Day, Chap. III.

had to cook their dinner, and the confusion and discomfort may be imagined. Say a dozen men came in, after five hours' duty; there is one fire; all want to cook at one time; they quarrel, swear, fight—but enough. The consequence was, that men went to public-houses and got their dinner, preferring a tap-room to the home provided for them. And then, as to food, some men spent almost all their money on it, and others nearly starved themselves to save money. I have seen one man eat a pound of beef for his dinner, and I have seen another cut a red herring in half to make it serve two days. Now a cook is kept, and every man in the section-house has a regular mess, and that ready at a certain time, which costs them less than providing for themselves separately. When I became pretty well acquainted with the force, I felt that the young men were being ruined; that the loss of home comforts drove them to the public-house or out of the service; and I wrote to the Chief Commissioner, then Colonel Rowan, making known to him the state of things as they then were. He sent a very kind answer, thanking me for my letter, and promising to bear in mind what I had written. Soon after the improvements began; and the effect on the men has been, that single men now remain in the force, and drunkenness is the exception, instead of a prevailing evil."* So much for "preventive measures!" It would be difficult to say

* See also the *London City Mission Magazine* for October 1859.

how large an amount of sin and evil might be done away with by the timely employment of such.

We would fain commend to those who have read with interest and sympathy these few records of the blessing which has followed home missionary work among the police, the consideration that the City Mission has no missionary to the letter-carriers of London, a class amongst whom offences against the law have multiplied to a fearful extent of late years; partly from the peculiar temptations to which they are exposed, some of which admit of a remedy. "I have stated,"* says the Rev. John Davis, the ordinary of Newgate, in a letter, dated 20th November 1860, "that there cannot be less than one hundred servants of the post-office now suffering penal servitude, *but this is much under the truth.*" The rule of the London City Mission is, not to appoint a missionary unless a portion of his salary is guaranteed by the public. We appeal to the thousands and tens of thousands of English people," who are daily indebted to the "London Letter-Carriers," to grant them this boon. Let us endeavour to rescue them, as a body, from so much sin and degradation. A missionary of good judgment, constantly employed among them, might succeed in devising and obtaining a remedy for those evils from whence arise some of their peculiar temptations. Above all, he might carry to them that, which is the remedy for all sin, the message of salvation in Jesus Christ.

* Before the Court of Aldermen.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEDGE FLOWER.

DAY after day, as a city missionary passed over Paddington Green, a sight met his view in a retired part of it which called forth his tender sympathy. Shrinking out of view, taking no notice of any one, there sat, hour after hour, an old woman, and a young girl almost twelve years old. The poor little girl, diseased and suffering as children exposed to such early hardships generally are, used to sit on the ground with her head on her mother's shoulder; they spoke to no one, and no one spoke to them. But the missionary could not pass them by. "What were they doing there?" he inquired; "they were *homeless*," the mother replied. "Once they lived in D—— Street, but *now* they had no home." "How did they live?" "They got a very few halfpence during the day; at night they went to a coffee-shop, where they used to sit and sleep." When they lived in D—— Street, the little girl used to go to the George Street Ragged School.

The missionary thought that the best thing to be done for the child was to place her in a refuge, and for that purpose he made the case known to those who were able to help. It was sad to take her from her old mother, but sickness, dirt, and want were destroying the child. "She was," said the compassionate missionary, "down trodden." The father he found was still alive, and, probably by his persuasion, the parents agreed to go into the workhouse, when the child was provided for. At length, one Saturday the missionary came for her, and took her to her new home.

It was too late; hunger, hardship, and sickness had done their work on that young and feeble frame. She lingered a little while and then died.

"The case of Ellen Major," said the matron of the Home * which gave her shelter at the last, "was the most trying we ever received, yet it was a great mercy that such an object of pity should have been rescued, and that every blessing that could have been desired, was granted on her behalf. Her death was a happy one; she was contented and thankful for all

* The child was placed in one of the Homes at Camden Town in connection with the Rescue Society, through the Coral Fund, a lady kindly giving a subscription for that purpose.

It is a melancholy fact, and one of frequent occurrence, that when children are exposed to hardships and privations in their early years, no amount of care and kindness afterwards bestowed upon them can remedy the evil. Sometimes it affects the mind, sometimes the body. All who are acquainted with the young inmates of refuges in this country know how often the succour of the Christian philanthropist comes *too late*.

that she received, and her helplessness lasted but a short time. Her parents came frequently to see her, and the mother was by her side when she died; the father had just left. I felt God had ordered it so, that he was allowed to return to the workhouse, and rest in hope that night. I will name two or three little things in the child, pleasing in death. One of our little girls had, a few days previously, worked a book-marker with 'Lord help me' upon it. I had said, 'How nice for you, Ellen, if I pin it by your side on the wall, and repeat it when your pain returns,' and so it was done; but the child added, 'Good, good, good Lord, help me,' many times, On her mother coming the day she died, Ellen said, 'Mother, see,' turning to another book-marker, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' I asked her if she loved every one. She replied 'Yes.' About an hour before she died. she wished the girls would sing. It happened that Mr C—— came to shew a magic lantern, and had not long before seen her, so that all were engaged in the school-room, except the mother and myself; when the time came she died without a moan, a struggle, or a sigh.

"The poor child had been a sufferer for years, and it seems at eight years old had lain in a trance three days; she had been much worse and more helpless than before she died, and without common necessaries. The state of her body when we received her was so bad, and, together with her clothing, was so covered with vermin, that it took two hours to clean

her; during the time she was here, it continued to cause us anxiety.

"Another sad addition to this sad story is, that the missionary who brought her here on the Saturday caught cold, and was placed in his coffin on the following Saturday.

"The parents of Ellen have left the workhouse. They hoped to procure work, and so took an empty room; we made them a bed by cutting up small pieces. A lady also kindly gave me a blanket, sheet, and counterpane, another gave me two shillings and sixpence to buy a few little necessaries, and make the poor woman a dress for the funeral, and comfortably clothe the poor man; people could not be more grateful than they were. I merely name these little things to shew how good God has been."

CHAPTER VI.

A START IN LIFE.

THERE is something pleasant to human nature in contemplating the rise of an individual from a low to a high estate. It is a constant theme in story-books, both for the young and old; we find a man a beggar, and leave him a prince; or, if not a prince, a great man, rich, honourable, and with many friends. It is not, we suspect, love for our fellow-creatures, or pleasure in their prosperity, which makes this picture such an agreeable one; but, that what has happened to one person, may happen to another; and that, when we are engaged in erecting any of those pleasant dwellings called "castles in the air," we transfer the adventures of the fortunate individual to ourselves. It is true these great changes do very frequently take place; but they are ordinarily the result of a long life of industry and perseverance, combined with ability, and are too frequently only obtained at its close. But there is another great change in society, not so pleasant to think of, though

it may be, more profitable; it is, when a person, born in affluence, well-educated, and possessing abundance of blessings, sinks down and dies, among the most miserable, and sometimes among the most degraded, of the poor. Such changes are not much known, nor much talked about; the individual goes down as beneath the dark waters, only reappearing again upon the surface in the records of those, whose office it is to help and succour the miserable and the desolate in great cities.

On the floor of a dark room, in a dark court, in one of the worst neighbourhoods of London, an old man of about eighty was lying very ill. He had not been ill very long, about a week; neighbours and charitable persons had shewn an interest in his sufferings. Some had come to read to him; and, as this seemed to afford the old man comfort, a friend suggested to his wife to send for the missionary. He was very ill, and his wife sat silently watching him; if he should die ——, but the missionary would soon come.

He did come, but not soon enough to speak either comfort or hope to the sufferer. A few minutes before he entered the room, the old man died. The missionary looked round on a sad scene. There were present, several poor but sympathising neighbours. Of furniture the room was nearly bare; there was no bed; only some loose, brown stuff, scattered on the floor where the dead man was lying, which had been shaken out of its cover, that the cover might be sold, or pawned for food; there was no blanket nor sheet,

only a small piece of canvas which had been thrown over the sick. And upon whom was the missionary looking? Who was this poor old man? The missionary's thoughts went back to his own youth; for he saw lying there, a ship-captain and owner, the native of a village in the north, only three miles from his own birthplace, and whither he used, in early days to resort, to read the Bible to the cottagers.

Whatever the old man's sins or sorrows might have been, he seemed to have managed, while he lived, to have kept out of the workhouse, and to have supported his wife, who was much younger than himself, and her little son, a boy about twelve years old. His widow was now obliged to look out for some yet more wretched and cheaper place, in which to lodge herself and her child. She found one in another alley, a ground-floor, behind a barber's shop, of which apartment the missionary's description is, "this room is only like a large closet as regards size, and is almost empty."

There are few employments more beneficial to the character, than that of the London city missionary. He is continually occupied in seeking out the vicious and the miserable, in the hope of rendering them, by the good tidings which he brings them, less vicious and less miserable. The emolument is small and fixed; equal only to that of a good artisan; it has nothing to tempt the covetous, and being fixed, the daily duties cannot be touched with the thought of it; to do them justice, we think there exist but few bodies of men, possessing more ready sympathy, more wide-

spread benevolence, and more earnest Christianity, than the London city missionaries. In the present instance, the interest and friendship of the missionary followed the poor widow to her "empty closet," and centred particularly on the ragged little boy of twelve; for who knows better than a London city missionary, the temptation and unhappiness of a child's life in the streets? The little fellow had a good character; for a year past he had been attending a ragged school, and the master spoke very highly of him. He was very anxious indeed to earn his own living; but how? was the question. The first thing the missionary did for him, was to take away his rags, and clothe him in some respectable garments, which a lady had kindly given him for the use of the poor. The next thing was to get him into a refuge, where he might be fed, receive some instruction in reading and writing, and be taught a trade. But he tried in vain; there was a fatal obstacle; it was the little fellow's good character. Our readers, perhaps, will think this strange; but unhappily, while there are a great number of reformatories, where boys convicted of crime may be received and instructed, there are very few indeed where children only destitute can be received, without payment. Unsuccessful in this attempt, the missionary next bethought himself of the Shoe-blacks' Society; and, pleased to see his respectable appearance in his tidy clothes, he promised to call at the "empty closet" on a certain day, and take the candidate with him.

It does not appear upon what the mother and son contrived to live during this time; the poor woman was earnestly desirous to do something, but she had certainly nothing to do. Perhaps it would be better, the missionary thought, for her son to go into the Shoe-blacks' Society, where he might earn something, than into a refuge, where he could earn nothing. Better for the present, it might be, but not for the future; one great cause of the extreme poverty of the poor, is the necessity of thinking only of the present; if the boy could have been admitted into a refuge, and taught a trade, he might in future days have been able to support himself and his mother; but what could a little helpless ignorant fellow of twelve, earn? However, he was glad enough to accompany his friend the missionary, on a visit to the master of the —— Shoe-black School. The master heard the story; but what was the surprise and dismay, both of the missionary and his little friend, when they heard that the latter could not be admitted. "No! not with such a good character?" "No; impossible." "And why is it impossible?" "Because he has only one eye." This did not seem at all an evident conclusion to the missionary. "Cannot," he asked, "a boy blacken shoes as well with one eye as two?" The master was inexorable; the missionary wondered more and more, especially as he knew there were two boys in the brigade who had been deprived of the sight of one eye. At length the master confessed the truth; it was not the loss of the eye, but

the disfigurement occasioned by it, to which he objected; the lid was closed, drawn entirely over the eye. The missionary, with his poor young charge, left the school in silence. "Now what is to become of this child," he thought; "is he to be a vagabond or a thief, or what is to be done with him?" The child, rejoicing probably to have found so powerful a friend, walked along in silence, not troubled with the same anxieties. Upon being questioned as to the loss of his eye, he said, it had been occasioned by an accident, a shoemaker's pricker had run into it. Thus, the hopes of the day disappointed, he returned to the dark, empty closet, and the missionary to his home, to digest new plans for the benefit of his little friend. "It does not follow," he said to himself, "that because one brigade rejects him another should. I will try the —— Brigade to-morrow."

Thither on the morrow he went alone, leaving the child behind him, that he might be better able to plead the dangers and temptations to which he was exposed, from the cruel want, and hunger, and sorrow of his daily lot. "The very end of these societies," he argued, "is that they shall stretch out a hand to the most needy—helping a lame dog over the stile." On this occasion his eloquence prevailed; the master agreed to see the candidate for shoe-black honours.

"Send him to me," he said with sympathising kindness; "I will set him to work, if possible, without making any objection whatever." Accordingly on the boy being sent to him, he installed him, to

the great satisfaction of the missionary, into the ranks of the Bluegate Field Brigade.

Here was a start in life. Honest and industrious, the little fellow worked at the shoe-blacking by day, went to the school in the evening, and returned to sleep in his mother's room at night. But still the missionary had many a misgiving about him. The Shoe-black Society, like all other professions, is overstocked, and the shoe-blacks so many, that their earnings are very small. Perhaps the boy might manage to find food for himself; but how could he keep both himself and his mother? His friend began to fear that such a "start in life" was like getting possession of one brick, when you want to build a house. The mother, indeed, was willing to work; but "having work" is like "having a fortune," a person must either be born to it, or attain it by his own ability and industry. It is something, however, to take one step on the right road. There is no comparison to be made between the boy who rolls in the gutter all day, playing marbles and begging, and the one who blacks shoes all day, goes to school in the evening, and sleeps in his mother's dark closet at night—one is so much above the other as regards "a start in life." But will not our readers feel with us that life, with such a start, is a race, of whose difficulties, dangers, and sorrows we can know nothing? The benevolent efforts made to help the criminal to return to an honest life are not too many, they are even too few; but the efforts made to pre-

vent the children of the poor from *falling into* crime are sadly disproportionate to those made to raise them up again. Sometimes we have an idea that it is an injury to the poor to help them too much. So it is, if injudiciously done; but there are certain things which people cannot do for themselves; and no boy, we think, left without a father, and without any means whatever of learning a trade, or being put into the way of working for an honest living, was ever injured by being provided with a fair start in life. There can be no doubt that the ties of domestic duty ought never to be violated; that parents ought to provide for their children, and children for their parents when they are aged. But we must consider the world as it is, and do the best we can under the circumstances. There are few ways in which we can more legitimately help a boy to help himself, than in giving him the means of earning a living, when sickness or death has deprived him of the help of a father.

It is a remarkable fact, that in the report of the London city missionary who labours especially among outcasts, we observe that, of the lads who become thieves or vagabonds, the proportion is two-thirds greater of those who have lost their father to those who have lost their mother; from which it would appear that the father is a greater loss even than the mother. Our readers will perhaps have noticed, in the stories related about refuges, that the boys are often fatherless; and we have observed the

same fact in the majority of the cases of these children of the streets which have come under our notice.

The little shoe-black continued so steady and well-conducted, that after a time some friends were found willing to pay for his admission into a Refuge School. Here he began life again as a wood-chopper. "The loss of his eye," says the governor, in his first report of him, "retards his progress, and I fear it will militate against him in his struggle to get on in life." From wood-chopping he was promoted to tailoring, and at the end of a year, the report from the governor was—"Though the loss of an eye is a great drawback to his progress in his trade, still he has kept pace with other boys; his conduct is good and trustworthy." The schoolmaster says—"He has made considerable progress in his lessons since he has been in the Refuge. When he first came, he could scarcely read; now he can read and write *well*, and is making good progress in arithmetic. I trust, by the time he is fourteen years of age, that I shall be able to put him out in life with the capability of earning his own living."

CHAPTER VII.

POVERTY'S PRISON-HOUSE.

"IN a small house containing two apartments, in my district," we copy from one of the journals of a city missionary, on the Rag Fair district, "lives an elderly woman, with two widowed daughters, one of whom has three children, and the other two. The husband of the grandmother is a pensioner in Greenwich Hospital, where he has been for many years, and where he will be comfortably provided for as long as he may live. So far, therefore, as any support is concerned, the wife's condition is just as though she had been left a widow. For a long time she was somewhat regularly employed as a nurse in the parish of Shadwell; but, owing to a combination of circumstances, she has of late only been engaged occasionally in that capacity. She is evidently a very sensible and persevering woman.

"One of the daughters' husbands, a sailor, was suddenly removed from this world, while at home, without any visible cause, ailment, or warning, four years

ago. The widow is a pitiable object, being paralysed and almost wholly helpless, which is occasioned in part by a diseased finger on the right hand, probably incurable, unless the hand be taken off. She has two children, the elder being seven years old. The other daughter lost her husband about the same time that her sister became a widow. He also was a sailor, and left his ship, with some others of the crew, while on a foreign coast, in a boat, four years previous; no tidings of his destiny have ever been received. The eldest of these three children is a boy named William.

"The mother goes out to work; but it is only now and then that she can meet with employment. This is pitiable, indeed, as she is healthy, active, and laborious. She has had a few days' work at our house lately. The children are clothed in rags, or nearly naked. Because of this, I am informed, they *are never allowed to go out into the street at all;* when any one knocks at the door, they are driven up stairs quickly, before the door is opened. There, in a very small, smoky room, the poor creatures are located from morning to night, for months and months together. Only last night, the grandmother stated that, during the last six months, *they had not been outside of the door.* In this way they exist, for they can hardly be said to live; occasionally getting a little food, which keeps body and soul together; they are deprived, of course, of all means of education. This is one of the most touching cases of real distress

which has ever come under my notice. These women having seen, what are sometimes called, 'better days,' have considerable delicacy and self-respect; and gave as a reason why the little ones were being kept so closely confined, that they were desirous of 'keeping their poverty to themselves.'

"The girl whom I have mentioned as being seven years of age, is very sharp; and scarcely seeing or hearing anything beyond the boundaries of the place where they are cooped up as prisoners, is led, probably, in consequence, to listen the more eagerly to what is said by those who occasionally call. 'You would not think,' said the grandmother, 'that this child would be minding anything uttered in her hearing, but, after a person has gone out, she can tell it all over again.' If I am not mistaken, it has been intimated to me that this child's intellect is not clear. This seems rather strange, believing, as I do, that the reverse is really the case; but it would not be very surprising if all of them appeared somewhat silly, considering their condition. My visits are very acceptable to these suffering people, and they appear to be very thankful for the interest taken in their welfare."

The missionary did more. He opened the door of this "Poverty's Prison-house" to one of its inmates, and, through him, poor little William was placed, by the kindness of some friends, in the Boys' Refuge, Whitechapel.

A year passed away, and then his friends had news

of William. "Of the boys now in the refuge," said the Governor, "there are some who, I trust, feel the power of religion, and, even in the dormitories, are not ashamed, nor afraid to kneel by their bedside morning and evening. They sometimes ask important questions respecting personal religion; some we may see, at different times, reading their little books, and some the Bible; and I do hope and trust, that many of these boys may be useful servants in God's holy Church. Among those thus changed, I may name William ——. He was a very troublesome and ignorant little boy when I first knew him, but he is quite altered. I gave him leave, during last week, to visit his grandmother; he went and found his little brother at her house; the brother did something wrong, for which the grandmother scolded him in a manner which shocked the elder child. He told her how wrong it was for her to do so, and that he feared she would be lost. He cried when he came home, and has since often asked me to try and get his little brother into the refuge; and when I asked him, why? he said, "Oh! sir, do try to get my brother in! I wish I could save my poor little brother, and bring him here!"

"William is a very good boy," continues the governor in his report of the child, "he is progressing satisfactorily in trade, and school; he has a good conduct and industrial stripe, and is a member of the refuge band. He is a good working, and a willing boy; he has been very consistent in his conduct, and

I have every reason to believe he is an anxious inquirer after divine truth. On Sunday morning last, after the usual address, he came up very softly to my side, and slid his little hand into mine, and whispered something indicative of his love to the Lord. If I ask them, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' up go their little hands, 'I am, sir! I am, sir!' there is no doubt but that a spiritual thirst has been excited among some of these poor boys, and Jesus has said, 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they *shall* be filled.' 'He will pour floods upon the dry ground;' and may a plentiful harvest spring up to the praise and glory of His great name."

The good conduct and industrial stripe, is a badge of honour, and can only be obtained on the following conditions:—

First, The boy must have been six months in the refuge.

Secondly, He must not have been reported for fighting, lying, swearing, or dishonesty.

Thirdly, He must be recommended by his trade master, for diligence and industry in the workshop, and have made satisfactory progress therein.

Fourthly, He must be recommended by his schoolmaster, for application to his lessons, and have made satisfactory progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

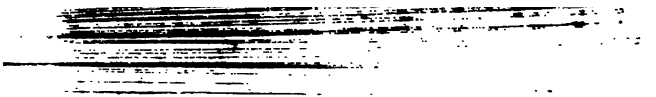
Within a year or two more, the next news of William was, that he still maintained his good character. Though very ignorant when he was first sent to

the refuge, not even knowing his letters, he could then both write and cypher, and his masters gave him a good character, both in trade and school. He left the refuge with the commendation of his teachers, and was apprenticed to a good business.*

"Not one of this family," says the missionary, "so far as I know, young or old, have given any indication of criminal propensities as regards covetousness, or stealing. William has been bound as an apprentice for five years to learn engineering, near to his own home; a situation such as few boys, even with living parents, of the working or poorer classes, could hope to obtain."

* The whole cost of this boy to the Coral Fund during the years he was in the Refuge, amounted only to £21 : 2 : 6.

Sins of the Day.



"The Husband Penitently Asked Forgiveness, but Asked in Vain."—(See Page 179.)

CHAPTER I.

THE WATER SUPPLY.

IN a small dwelling, in a humble street, on the banks of the Thames, there lived, in the November of 1859, a man and his wife and three children. The wife seems to have been a notable, thrifty woman, by whose efforts probably the family were "kept together." One day at the period named, she entrusted her husband with a sum of £5 to pay a bill that was owing. He went out, but did not return. At length, in the course of the afternoon, he was brought home in a cab, drunk. The angry wife, of course, resented this greatly; the husband, next day, penitently asked forgiveness, but asked in vain. She would not forgive him, and consequently he would not go to work. Next day came, but the wife inexorably refused forgiveness, in which she persisted. Considering, however, the consequences, the man returned to his work. It was too late; his employers refused to take him on again, telling him, that as he had taken three days for his own pleasure, he might

take another three for theirs. With a sinking heart, the repentant drunkard returned to his home. This additional loss by no means inclined the wife to overlook the offence; she upbraided him night and day. At last, one Saturday afternoon, as she was busy cleaning up her house, not content with turning a deaf ear to all his entreaties, she added, he might go and hang himself if he liked. He left the room, and went up stairs to his bedroom. The wife went on, plying away her dusters and her broom; and when all was ready and tea prepared, she bethought herself of her husband, and went to call him. He had taken her at her word, and was hanging to the bed-post! The woman rushed out into the street, and screamed for help; two men came in and cut the rope; but it was too late; her husband was dead.*

Drink was the cause of this frightful domestic tragedy. Drink, that fills our police courts, our workhouses, our hospitals, our jails.† In our own country, could but this one vice be subdued, we might almost hope to realise the visions of the Emperor of the French, and proclaim, "Pauperism extinct." The power, too, of this evil passion, when it has once gained

* This sad story was forwarded to us by the Missionary of the London Bridge District. We are always willing to give the name and address of those persons whose cases are mentioned, to any one who asks for it, within a reasonable period.

† It was once stated to us by a city missionary, that the greater number of those who were compelled to become inmates of workhouses were brought there by drink. From these, of course, we *must* exclude the sick and the aged.

the ascendancy, is fearful to contemplate. Well may the Scripture say, "Strong drink is raging." We remember the remarkable case of an old Irish widow, which occurred in London two or three years ago. For seventeen years she had been a teetotaler; a most happy abstinence from sin and shame. At the end of this period, a medical man thought some slight stimulant necessary for her health. She consulted her priest, who advised her to take it. The effect was magical. No sooner had she tasted it, than the old appetite returned with augmented force; she did not stop until she had spent all her savings for seventeen years, which amounted to no less a sum than £150, and shortly afterwards she died.

Let us look back at the picture of English society, seventy or eighty years since. It is notorious that the vice of drunkenness pervaded the middling classes then, to fully as great an extent as it now pervades the lower. What has wrought the cure? Christianity and civilisation; a wider diffusion of the gospel, has raised the tone of moral feeling, even in those who are not actuated by religious principle; intercourse with other nations, cultivated tastes, and intellectual attainments, have substituted recreations more worthy of a man, for the odious propensity of drinking. We were going to say *animal* propensity; but it is not an animal propensity, no animal is addicted to intoxication. The same remedies, we think, would work the same change in the lower classes, *i. e.*, the diffusion of true religion amongst

hem, and a higher tone of civilisation. The spread of true Christianity, will teach man the obligation he lies under to obey the laws of God, which forbid intemperance; it will empty the public-houses, and cure our people of drunkenness. There is no good apart from God, and there is no evil which the love of God in the heart of man cannot remedy. As an example we may cite that, whenever the dew of God's Spirit has really fallen upon any place in the times of Revival, one of its most striking visible fruits has been the cessation of this sin.

In the consideration of the second subject as regards the working classes and the poor, namely, the diffusion of a higher degree of civilisation amongst them, there are two means, especially, by which it cannot be doubted, that the amount of drunkenness in this country might be considerably lessened; the one is the providing rational and proper amusements for them; at present, in many places, particularly in villages, the public-house is the only place of recreation the poor man has, the only place where he can meet his neighbours, talk over the news of the day, in short, amuse himself; and amusement is the law of our nature. The other means, and the one which we are now purposing to urge upon the consideration of all those who desire to aid in the good work of diminishing the frightful evil of drunkenness, is the furnishing the labouring classes with a sweet and plentiful supply of water.

However true it may be in political economy that

the increase of a nation in commerce, manufactures, and the arts of civilised life, tends to an increase of comfort, and the supply of the necessary wants among the labouring classes, yet there are certain exceptions; certain cases in which an increased abundance among the rich, tends to abridge the allowance absolutely necessary to the poor. In our days, Water forms an instance of this. The water companies, which carry abundance into the mansions of the wealthy, tend to diminish the supply of the poor; the wells, pumps, &c., of former days, get out of repair, and fall into disuse. In a poor street in Brighton, there used to be formerly three wells; gradually, one, after another has been closed, and the water in the only one remaining open, is quite, say the inhabitants, unfit for drinking. It is a very long street; here and there are blocks of houses in which the water is laid on; for the others there is none, nor any means, that we know of, in the immediate neighbourhood, of obtaining any; though this state of things has been brought before the public, and urged upon the consideration of benevolent individuals, for years past, it remains unaltered; those who can afford to have the water laid on, have it; those who cannot, go without it, or get it how they can.

God "sendeth the springs into the valleys which run among the hills," and down they pour this priceless, healthful, helpful gift to man. But man denies to man the gift of God; there are few of the physical causes of suffering which oppress the poor, more en-

during, and further extending, than the want of water, and few which produce more moral evil. Suppose a fly-man comes home from a long, hot, dusty drive, and takes out the little bit of cold dinner that he brought with him from home in the morning, wrapped up and deposited secretly in the corner of the carriage. He wants something to drink, does he not? Where is he to get it? He *must* go to the public-house, and when he goes to the public-house he *must* drink beer; he cannot get water. The remedy proposed for this evil has been the drinking fountains.

The drinking fountain! would that its clear bright waves sprang up in every town and village of our land, at every railway station, beside every public road!

"Wherever these fountains have been erected," it is said, "drunkenness has decreased. At the conduit on the Market Hill in Cambridge, there is a single ladle to enable thirsty souls to obtain a draught; it is truly astonishing to observe how much it is used; and," continues the writer, "why should there not be more fountains to supply water, both to man and beast?" Why not, indeed? There is only one reason; we do not think enough of the wants of our fellow-creatures.

A director of the Midland Counties' Railway, has erected, at his own expense, at the Leicester Station, a marble drinking fountain. He says concerning it: "During the short time it has been in operation

ample proof has been afforded of the great advantage of, and even necessity for, such supplies of water for drinking purposes. It is with great pleasure that I state that, at their last meeting, the directors of the Midland Counties' Railway resolved to erect drinking fountains at all the principal stations on their line. The cost is so very small in comparison with the greatness of the benefit, that I venture to express a hope that before long every railway station of any importance throughout the country will be supplied with one or more of these fountains. May I also add, that at two or three of the Midland stations troughs of water, always filled, have been placed adjoining the cattle and sheep pens. It frequently happens that cattle are driven to the railway after standing for hours in the market; they are then loaded into trucks, where they are kept in a state of the greatest excitement for a further lengthened period, and it may be during a journey of hundreds of miles without any opportunity of watering. The cattle-dealers are very thankful, and speak in the highest terms of this arrangement for the benefit of their stock."

"The first fountain erected," says the Report of the Drinking Fountain Association, "is resorted to about six thousand times, one open at Bethnal Green eight thousand times, and one in Horseferry Road, Westminster, five thousand times *daily*. It is ascertained that the forty-three fountains in Liverpool are frequented about fifteen millions of times annually, and

t is estimated that an adequate number of fountains would be resorted to above twenty-one millions of imes annually. At this rate—which, however, may be taken as below the average London rate—an adequate number of fountains in London would be annually resorted to about one hundred and seventy-six millions of times."

At a meeting of the National Temperance League, we hear that the St Giles' drinking fountain, erected in Endell Street at the sole cost of Marmaduke Langdale, Esq,, has created a great impression in that densely-populated neighbourhood. The number of persons who drank of it on the day of its being opened, between the hours of twelve and eight, were 2179. Since that day the number of persons drinking has averaged *four* a minute; so that during the seventeen hours, from five in the morning till ten at night of each day, upwards of four thousand persons avail themeslves of it. Working men express themselves as highly sensible of the value of this gift, and the only inconvenience apparent at present, is in the large number of persons who bring cans and jugs to be filled with the water, to the disturbance of those who wish to drink and pass on. Another fountain, it is hoped, will shortly be opened in the neighbourhood of the Seven Dials, towards which the contributions of working men only are accepted.

Nevertheless, great as is the benefit conferred by the drinking fountains, there are certain regulations with regard to them which, unless they are altered,

will, we fear, impede very much their usefulness in lessening intemperance amongst the poor. One of these impediments, is the objection of the water companies to grant a constant supply; thereby rendering necessary a machinery of taps, &c., which, especially in poor districts, is continually out of order. The other, is the difficulty which appears to be found in erecting them in low neighbourhoods. Of four fountains subscribed for, through the Coral Fund,* one only is at work. The second, intended for a thoroughfare in Rag Fair, has been delayed for a twelvemonth, although the site has been agreed upon, until another designed by a nobleman for a more public locality shall be completed. The third is seldom, indeed, in working order; either the water supply is stopped, or the cups have been wrenched off; while opposite to it flourishes, in the greatness of success, the public-house designating itself derisively, in all the splendour of blue and white letters,—

"THE FOUNTAIN."

The fourth, intended for the street above mentioned, was constructed after a design which rendered it impossible to make use of it for that locality.

In our misty, rainy country we do not want fountains as ornaments. Nothing can look more deplorable than the playing waters looming through a yellow fog; we do not want them in places of fashionable resort, the rivals of the pillar or the statue; con-

* See *Coral Missionary Magazine.*

templating them as intended solely for the use of the labouring classes, they would seem to us, under these circumstances, as completely dissociated from the work they are intended to do, as happened in the adjudication of the case between nose and eyes, that

> "Whenever the nose put his spectacles on,
> By daylight or candlelight eyes should be shut."

What labouring man would take his bread and cheese, and sit down to eat it at a splendid fountain, in a place of fashionable resort? What we want is, good useful fountains, in low neighbourhoods, with a constant supply of water, the rivals, not of the statue or the pillar, but of the public-house.

Another cause, which, unless it is obviated, will render the drinking fountains an ineffectual remedy against intemperance, is the custom which prevails in some places of shutting off the supply in the winter. It is the *habit* of intemperance among the poor, against which we have to contend; a *habit*, the foundation of which is laid in early years, for it is quite surprising sometimes what a large amount of ginger beer, &c., is sold by the keepers of small shops to the children of the poor. The habit thus commenced, becomes confirmed in after life, and can only be broken through by the substitution of another: now, if a man is compelled to go to the public-house to obtain something to drink in the winter, of course he will continue the same habit in the summer; severe frosts in our country are not frequent, nor of long continuance, and no other cause ought to inter-

rupt the water supply. That the drinking fountains may be of essential service against intemperance is certain, and we trust they will. The City Mission, reporting the number of "drunkards reclaimed," during the year 1859, at 1102, being an increase of 306 above the previous year, ascribes this additional success, in part, to the beneficial effects of drinking fountains.

We must also remember that the drinking fountains, excellent as they are, will not obviate the social and physical evils entailed upon the poor by the want of water for domestic purposes, cooking, washing, &c., &c. Sometimes people will say of a poor family in distress, "Well, but they might be clean, at any rate." Might they? It sometimes happens that nothing is more expensive than cleanliness. Such an observation is very much like that of the little French princess, who wondered people should starve, when they could get such nice buns for a halfpenny! If we paid the same proportion of our income for water that the poor sometimes do, we doubt whether we should think it so easy to be clean. We are apt to make as erroneous an estimate, of the opportunity which the poor have, of supplying themselves with ordinary necessaries, as the philosopher did of education, who would not have his son taught to read and write, considering such knowledge so common that it came of itself.

Let us see; here is a man, and his wife, and six children, poor people; then, here is a gentleman, and lady, and six children. The poor man earns 12s. per

week, so that, if he buys *only* two buckets of water every day, at a halfpenny per bucket, that comes to 7d. per week, or about one-twentieth of his income. The gentleman has £500 per annum, the water used for his household costs, perhaps, £1, 10s. per annum, or almost 6¾d. per week, being the three hundred and thirty-sixth part of his income. Therefore, it is nearly eighteen times cheaper for the gentleman's family to practise cleanliness, than for the poor man's, *supposing* that two buckets of water per day would suffice for that purpose, and we need scarcely add, that, for a family of eight persons, such a supply would be far too small.

Water! we ask this boon in behalf of all the poor in England to whom it is at present denied; water, as the natural drink of man, the gift of God to him for that purpose. God has poured out of the earth freely and abundantly this precious gift; let us do the part which He has left to us, of bringing it freely within reach of the poor.

CHAPTER II.

THE CINDER HEAP; OR, THE DISTRESS FOR RENT.

"OUT of work!" "Well!" says a young gentleman to himself, whilst sitting cosily by the parlour fire, as these words reach his ears, "he's out of work! I should think he'd be glad of it; it's very pleasant, indeed, to have nothing to do all day long but what one likes;" and the young gentleman looks as though he would like to be "out of work" rather oftener than that catastrophe falls to his share.

It is true the young gentleman does not realise that, to the poor man, "out of work" means "out of food;" means debt, distress, starvation, or the workhouse; but he might know it, if he were to think upon the subject.

We fear sometimes that the words "out of work," scarcely convey their full sense of the misery endured, even to those who do take thought for the poor. A healthy, strong, industrious man, who sits at home by his own fireside, wanting work, while his wife and

children are wanting bread, is like a man in a ship-wrecked vessel, with countless stores of wealth on board, and who yet sees himself, and all that he loves, about to perish. What is the use of his wealth? And what to a poor man, out of work, is the present use of his health, his strength, his industry? Sorrow begins to gather round him. At first the bill begins at the little shop, and it gets longer, and longer, and longer, as the time goes by. Perhaps it will take him all the summer to pay it. Then *trust* ceases; his own Sunday coat and his wife's Sunday gown are pawned to meet the daily wants. One thing after another goes; the cottage looks bare and wretched; and the rent—that dreadful rent—is getting heaped up as the weeks go by. If he should even get work now, when will he be well-to-do again? And all this because he is "out of work." He is not sick, nor idle, nor a bad workman, nor a drunkard; he is only "out of work."

Whether from the habit of being out, or the misery, under such circumstances, of being at home, few men ever pass these wretched days in their own dwellings, unless, indeed, they pass them in bed. But the industrious man, who has no taste for bed nor for the public-house, generally passes them, hour after hour, day after day, walking about "seeking for work."

It so happened that, about the close of the year 1857, a labouring man, at a town in Yorkshire, named Thomas Pulling, found himself, with his wife and family, in the deplorable condition above de-

scribed. Work was not to be had; at least, he could not get it. What was to be done? The only resource which presented itself was to go to some other town. It is incredible to what distances the honest poor will go, when "out of work," to seek for it. Manchester was the town fixed upon; and, leaving his wife and children to follow, if he should have good fortune, Thomas set out for the great and wealthy city.

Here poor Thomas recommenced his task; the weary, weary tramp after work. Then came the long, long walks, the disappointments, the daily dwindling of the few shillings which were to find him bed and food.

Things began to mend, but only a little. Then his brother came over upon the same quest, and the two shared their meal together.

So the spring came on, and the summer, and then the winter drew near again. The men had a little work, not enough, but still something. The wife and her children might come now, it was thought, and they would all live together; they should get along somehow. The brother's wife was dead. They got a little bit of furniture together; something like a bed or two, or substitutes for them, a rickety table, a chair or two, and a kettle. The whole only cost a few shillings, but it was all the poor men had to expend.

So the wife came. It was but exchanging the lane in the street of one city, for the lane in the street of

another; but, doubtless, both wife and children would be glad to be with "Father" again.

It was rather a sad business, however, for the wife. Still the same story—the money all spent for food, and still the same dreadful arrears of rent running up; winter, too, was upon them; dreary mid-winter, when work is more scarce than ever, and when sometimes those who have it cannot do it. "Not a stroke of work did my husband do for six weeks," perhaps some poor woman will say, "*through that 'ere frost.*" This, however, was a mild, damp winter, muddy beneath and dark above.

The wife had not long been settled in the poor, little habitation in the dirty lane, which was to be her new home, when the same trouble came upon the family again. Thomas and his brother were again "out of work." "Out of work" at the beginning of December! Weary days and weary nights might indeed be expected now; and weary, in truth, they were. It was hard to find bread for the children's mouths, and there was the rent still running on, promises and entreaties keeping out the landlord, like the trunk of a fallen tree keeps out the stream, which is gathering in tenfold force behind it.

It was a sad errand to go out on every morning, and a sadder task still to report the want of success at night.

"There they stand," said a woman once to us, of her husband and her son, "there they stand all day in the cold upon that Cliff, with their chairs, often and

often getting *nothing 'cept an appetite.*" Whether poor Thomas and his brother got an appetite we do not know, but for a long time they certainly got nothing else.

At length, one happy evening, the men came home, and reported they had got a job, and were to go to work on Monday. On Monday! joyful news!

Well, now, what was to be done for the present? The trunk of the tree was giving way, and the long arrears of rent were about to pour down upon them; the agent would call for the rent on Monday. But what need to fear that, when money would be coming in? Still, he could not be put off with only promises any longer. So a small sum of money was scraped together somehow, and entrusted to the wife, for the purpose of paying him a small portion of the debt, and also to find herself and her children food.

Monday morning came, and the men set out to go to work. With a lighter heart, the poor wife went about her daily business. During the morning, the agent, as was expected, called for the rent. The wife produced the money; not all that was owing, indeed, but the part, promising to pay the rest soon, as on that very day her husband had gone to work. The man looked dissatisfied. What could she do? She had nothing more to give but promises; at length, to her relief, he turned to go away, and now she began to prepare her children's dinner. She had not been extravagant, in the hope of her new-found riches;

the meal was only to consist of a little bread and some tea; but no doubt the little ones eyed it with dancing eyes, and the mother herself would be refreshed by the poor Englishwoman's greatest luxury —often her breakfast, dinner, and supper,—when she can get it, "a comfortable cup of tea."

Just now another visitor entered the scantily furnished room. What could he want? However, it must have been some relief to see it was not the man for the rent again. Poor mother! it was far worse! it was the bailiff come to sell all they had in the world, to pay the rent. Mother and children left their food untasted. The man looked contemptuously around. "The whole," he coldly said, "is not worth six shillings." But "the whole" was their "all," by night and by day; there was no use in crying, no use in scolding, they must see it all go, and sit down on the floor, and cry, if they liked, till the husband and father came home from his work. Not they, indeed! The bailiff took hold of the woman and turned her out of the house, commanding her children to be gone also; then, taking up the food she had been preparing, he flung it after them, took the key and locked the door.

Great was the grief of the poor woman and her children! What was to become of them? Were they to pass the night in the miserable, wet, foggy, alley? Would their neighbours shelter them? They were strangers in a strange place. There was only one comfort; though it was now but mid-day, yet the

evening would come, and then the father would be home! but they had no home! and when the father did come, he would have no money; and was this the happy Monday?

At length the dark afternoon closed in, and home came the father and the uncle. Sad was the welcome indeed that awaited them! The wretched family took counsel together, the result of which was, that the whole party set off to tramp through the city, to find, if possible, some quarters for the night.

Long did they tramp from place to place in vain; they could pay but little, and they had no friends. At length, at one lodging-house, they succeeded in getting shelter for the night for the woman and children; the weather not being severe, the men thought they might find some hiding-place till morning; there was an engine-house they knew of at a little distance, where they thought they could sleep for one night. It was not in the town, but at a place in the neighbourhood. Bidding, therefore, the wife and her children good night, they set out for the spot. To their vexation, when they reached it, the engine-house was closed; there was no hope of gaining admittance to it that evening.

We have said the weather was not severe, nor was it; but the cold damp air of the night began to chill the weary men, and they longed for some shelter; some place where they could get warmth and rest.

To go back to the city, and strive again for a lodging would be useless. What, then, should they do?

One of them thought of a place; there were some iron-works in the neighbourhood, outside of which there was sure to be a heap of nice warm cinders; bad as this might be for a bed, it was better than the damp ground, and it would warm them.

To the cinder-heap, consequently, they hastened; and, choosing a place where the warm air was issuing from beneath, the two men laid themselves down to sleep.

It was night in the great wealthy city. Of its millions of inhabitants, thousands slept warm and safely, feeling no evil, and caring for none; thousands passed the night in pleasure, in the luxurious ball-room, or the brilliant theatre, feeling no evil, and caring for none; and the morning dawned alike on the soft bed, the ball-room, and on the cinder-heap; but how different was the awakening!

The men slept long. The factory people came to their labour before it was light; but they did not awaken them; day came, but still they slept. The wife and her children woke up from their sleep, and they were alone; no one came. And no one ever came again. The father and his brother slept their last sleep on the cinder-heap. The warm air, issuing so pleasantly from beneath the cinders, was gas. They were both found dead.

It is not right to impute blame to a landlord in distraining for rent, except when any cruelty is

practised; as, in the above case, which took place at the close of 1857, and was reported in the *Times* of that year; but the law itself calls for amendment. In the United States, we believe, beds, and articles absolutely necessary for daily use, are exempted from seizure. No facility ought to be given to enable persons to live in a house without paying the rent; and no possibility afforded in the name of the law for oppression. It is upon the poor that the law of distrain for rent weighs most heavily. In many cases, their houses are owned by persons almost as poor as themselves; it would, therefore, be a hardship, as well as an injustice, to shelter a dishonest tenant. But does the present law ensure the payment of rent? Has it any better effect than the law of imprisonment for debt was found to have in former years? This law has been repealed, not only without any injury to the community, but, probably, with decided benefit; and we cannot but think the same result would follow an alteration of the law between landlord and tenant.

We give the following case, as an instance of the hardship to which a tenant is liable, by the power which landlords have under the present law.

"*Times*, Monday, September 24. 1860.—Marlborough Street.—A man named Richard C———, No. 1 C——— Street, was summoned for levying an illegal and excessive distress on goods belonging to a poor but respectable mechanic, at No. 8 G——— Street.

"Mr Edward Lewis, of Marlborough Street, gratuitously appeared for the complainant, and stated his case.

"Mr Lewis said the complainant, a short time back, had the misfortune to lose a child by death, and when he buried it, was in arrears for rent, half-a-crown. He had hard circumstances to contend with; and on the 13th instant, eight days after, he buried his wife, who had died soon after their infant. The day before the funeral, the 12th, five shillings were due, which would have been paid; but the unfeeling defendant, as landlord, taking advantage of the mournful procession leaving the house, actually broke open the door of complainant's apartment, and, with a broker, carried off all his little furniture, together with his tools of trade, and the few articles of apparel of his deceased wife; and that for five shillings, which he had been assured would be paid him on the complainant's return. He was aware the penalty under the 2d and 3d Victoria, cap. 71, was small, and quite inadequate to meet the justice of as hard-hearted and inhuman a case as the present. The object was to take the sense of the Court on it, and compel the return of the goods in question.

"The complainant, now residing in D——— Street, proved that all had been advanced; and said the defendant called on him on the 12th for his rent, when he told him of the loss of his wife, as well as child, that he should bury her the next day, and would directly afterwards pay the five shillings for

rent due; adding, that he had it then, but did not know exactly the cost of the interment at Woking, and, therefore, should like to wait till he returned. The defendant replied—'O! you have the money, and won't pay; then I know what to do,' and left. Returning from the funeral, he found his room-door, which he had left locked, broken open, and all he possessed taken away—bed and bedstead, mahogany sideboard, books, his work tools, and a gold ring, and the clothes of his dead wife, which he should be sorry to part with, though not, perhaps, in actual value, worth more than fifty shillings. Goods, tools, and clothes were all seized for five shillings.

"In reply to the charge, the defendant said the complainant had refused to pay him at all, because of the deaths; that other lodgers had grumbled because of the effluvia arising from the room he tenanted, and wanted it aired; and that he consulted a broker, who advised a distrain. All the goods he had got still, and would return on his rent and expenses being all paid him.

Mr Beadon said, the taking such an advantage of a poor man leaving his home to bury his deceased wife was most unfeeling and cruel in the extreme. If his object was simply airing a close room, why seize all the goods? Common decency, for any purpose, and under any circumstances, should have prompted him to wait till the next day.

"Mr Lewis—I am instructed to say, that all the man has stated in defence is untrue.

"Mr Beadon (to defendant)—Where is your broker in this inhuman proceeding?

"Defendant—I don't know.

"Mr Beadon—Your conduct, and that of the broker for lending himself to it, is most inhuman; and if the goods—every article—are not forthwith returned on payment of the five shillings for rent, without a farthing expense, you will be fined thirty shillings. Let every article be instantly returned."

CHAPTER III.

EVERY MAN'S BIRTHRIGHT; OR, THE CABMAN'S SABBATH.

WHICH is the best place to preach the gospel in? Some years ago it was thought a church was the *only* place; then it occurred to Christian people, that there were thousands upon thousands in a Christian country, who no more thought of going to church, than a crossing-sweeper thinks of going to court; then came the visiting from house to house, the meeting in the poor man's home, in the wretched lodging-house, the preaching in the open air; now, even the theatre uncloses its doors to the messengers of the gospel; but of all the unfavourable places, either for speaking or hearing, perhaps the most unfavourable would seem to be a London cab-stand. The noise, the hurry, the traffic—"frequently," says a city missionary, "have I been in danger of accident, and pulled out of danger by the men"—the men's attention diverted by looking out for a fare, their vices, ignorance, opposition, all appears to render the cab-stand a most unpromising field for a

gospel harvest. But the labourers went forth, God blessed the work, and men were saved. Now there are a considerable, and fast increasing number, of sober, thoughtful, godly men, among the London cab-drivers. We read, "The careless, the indifferent have become serious; the profane have begun to fear an oath; the drunkard to turn away with loathing from the intoxicating cup; the bold sceptic and scoffing infidel to acknowledge their doubts; the wavering have become decided, and a spirit of inquiry relating to divine things, never before so shewn, is manifesting itself. A deep seriousness appears to be settling on the minds of many, and the apathy, the indifference, before shewn, is to all appearance fast passing away. Not a few have become attendants on the means of grace, and several have united themselves in fellowship with the Church." Of some we hear, "they are daily witnesses for their Saviour, and are doing a great work among their fellow-men;" "constant attendants at the church and the Bible class, they are urging their fellow-cabmen to come also." Of another, and another, "he is a communicant, and quite a missionary in his place." "I have got a man in my employ," says one driver, "who always carries tracts under his box and distributes them as he thinks most proper." A fresh man came on my stand to-day," says a missionary; "I asked him if he had a Bible?" "Got a Bible!" he said, "I might as well be without a head; that book's all to me." And so it was all to Mark N——, the con-

verted Romanist. This man was one of the police, who now attend the cab-stands, in place of the old watermen. They are, many of them, superannuated soldiers and sailors. Mark N—— was first a Romanist, from a Romanist he had become an infidel, and felt, as he says, "a wish to hang all the priests and parsons in the world." The missionary reasoned with him, told him he had better read his Bible, and at length prevailed upon him to go to a place of worship. In the course of the sermon the preacher said, addressing different classes of people, "If there is a poor Roman Catholic here, he may come to the Saviour, and find mercy and pardon." This went straight to Mark's heart. After the sermon he spoke to the clergyman, who encouraged him to seek salvation in Christ. Time after time also, when the city missionary came to the cab-stand, he addressed himself to Mark. By the blessing of God on the seed thus sown, Mark became a penitent believer. He is now a great help to the missionary on the stand, and a member of the Cabmen's Lord's-Day Rest Association. He has a very great love for the Bible; he saved up all his odd pence till they came to £2, with which he bought, to his great delight, Scott and Henry's Commentary. The poor commentary, however, did not meet with a very kind welcome at home, for his wife, who was still a Romanist, assured him "*she would as soon have a viper in the house.*" He, however, stood firm to his book, and made it his daily study; he grew so fond of it that at last, one evening, he made

his appearance at the meeting in the missionary's room, somewhat to the amusement of the latter, with this huge book under the skirts of his greatcoat. "I brought it," he said, "that I might understand the passages of Scripture that are read. You know, Sir, "*I have a great deal of waste ground to fill up.*"

This favourable change in the men, reacts on their families. The little ones run to their father's bedside in the morning, to search his pockets for the tracts, which the missionary has given him; "when the man goes first on a good path," says a city missionary, "the woman generally follows." When the man goes to the church and the Bible-class, the woman goes too, and the children go to the Sunday-school. A reading-room for the cabmen in several districts, with a good library, has taken the place of the public-house. "I have lent about 200 books, during the year, from my own library, and most of them I have received safely back again," says a city missionary, whose *parish* consists of seventy cab-stands and 1000 drivers. There are now about 2000, out of 14,000 of the London cab-drivers, who enjoy their Sabbath; the increase of the six-day plates amounted to about 300 during the last year.

Who have been the instruments? and what have been the means of so happy a change? "Instruments," "means," only, we say, for the work is the Lord's. The instruments have been the London city mission-

aries;* the means, one of the principal means at any rate, the revival of the Sabbath among the cabmen. There is not a single journal of any missionary to these men, nor any case of conversion among them, that we are acquainted with, in which this does not stand prominently forward.

How can it be otherwise? The cabman works from sixteen to eighteen hours daily; "I change my horse between two and five in the afternoon," says one, "and at that time I very often see mechanics, especially in tbe building trades, leaving their daily labour, and on Saturday afternoon in the city, the rest of nearly all has begun. I go back to the stable at half-past nine, and leave the stable again with my cab at seven in the morning." When the Sabbath is included in these hours of labour, is such a man likely to remember that he has a soul? Some are worked harder still. What can be the effect of such a system upon the domestic habits of a man? "I scarce knows," said a rough-looking omnibus-conductor, finding his way up a by-road in a suburb of London to his dwelling, "I scarce knows my way home by daylight." Still more sad is the question, "What is the effect upon their souls of such an utter want of a pause in the hours of work, of any opportunity of worshipping God? A cabman was called one morning to take a fare out of London; it was a

* Followed by many others now, such as the Cabmen's Sunday Rest Association; but the City Mission "broke up the fallow ground," Mr Adams being appointed the first missionary in 1844.

man and woman about to be married. When they got to the church, the bridegroom invited Cabby to give away the bride. He did so; but he had known only the outside of a church; the religious service so deeply affected him, that he wept aloud. He afterwards became a Christian man, and told a missionary, he should never forget, while he was in the body, the effect that service had upon him.

What do the cabmen themselves feel upon this subject? They are quite willing to tell us. "I don't like Sunday work, sir; for I never feel happy to be driving in the streets, when the bells are chiming for church, and other people are going to the house of God. When I was in the country, I used to go to church regularly every Sunday, *and was as happy as a king!*" "When I am gone, take care of my poor Bill," said a dying mother to a missionary; "do talk to him about his soul!" Poor Bill was a cab-driver, and did not wish to hear about his soul; yet a tear would sometimes run down his cheek when the missionary spoke to him about his mother. At length he came to the missionary with a cheerful face, and said, "Well, I have given up work on Sunday." Now, cabmen do not have wages; they contract with their master to pay him fourteen shillings a day in the season, and nine shillings a day out of the season, and what they get over this sum, is all they can earn for themselves. It so happened that, on the Saturday night when Bill came to this determination, after having paid his master,

he had only one shilling left. "But never mind, Bessy," he said to his wife; "we'll have a rasher of bacon and some potatoes to-morrow, and go to church, and we shall be far happier than if we had roast beef and worked on the Sunday." So to church they went. "And this morning," he said to the missionary, "I came to work with a clear conscience." "Are we to be worked like our horses?" sometimes they say, to a missionary; and we all know what the life of a cab horse is. "I have been hackney coachman and cab driver for forty-six years," said Mr Powell, in a speech in the town-hall at Brighton, in November 1859; "I drove a hackney coach for thirty years, and never knew what it was to have a Sabbath to myself. I have been out from eight or nine o'clock in the morning, till twelve, one, two, or three o'clock the following morning; Sundays and all. At that time, and till within the last three or four years, cabmen and cab-masters seem to have been like the descendants of Ishmael—'their hand has been against every man, and every man's hand against them.' Everybody, till the last few years, has put the cab-driver down as the lowest of the low."

If the ordinary cab-driver is to be pitied, there is a case still more pitiable than his; it is that of the Sunday-man or night-man, or, as he is generally called, "the odd man." "For some time,"* says a cabman, with singular inconsistency, "I used *to pay a man to take my place on the Sunday;* and I

* Report of the Sunday Rest Association.

them spent that day comfortably with my family, and attended a place of worship, and never was more happy in my life." In this manner the unfortunate "odd man" is often employed to do work the cab-driver does not like to do himself. He is frequently a cab-driver who has lost his licence, and with it his character; and sometimes, we fear, he is a man who never had any character. Generally he has neither wife, nor child, nor home. He is frequently employed in night work; and thus, perhaps, comes but seldom under the notice of the missionary. Among the occupants of the London streets at night, "the odd man" on his box is not the one the least entitled to our pity. The clergyman of a crowded parish at the west end of London, was relating a sad case which had occurred on his district, of a gentleman's coachman who had lost his eyesight, and with it his situation, through being kept waiting at the door of a club-house, from eleven at night until one in the morning. "It was a remarkable night," continued the speaker; "it was the night on which, you may remember, *the cabman was found frozen to death* on his box."

We think a missionary, who would go on his errand of mercy when most of the happy, and well-conducted part of the world have left the streets to their night occupants, would find a most willing listener in the poor "odd man." We believe that, as a body, the London city missionaries have zeal and love enough for any service, and we cannot think the London City

Mission would object to the attempt being made if the funds were forthcoming. "Gather up the crumbs," a small number of pence, from a great number of people, would soon fill up the basket. A little fund, whose objects are detailed in the *Coral Missionary Magazine*, has helped the Rag Fair district and the mission among fishing-boats at Billingsgate to the amount of £700; a few more crumbs might help to send a friend to the "odd man" also.

"I was reminded I was in a heathen country," says an Indian missionary, "by seeing all the poor 'palkie-bearers' belonging to the palanquins sitting down outside the church, instead of entering." There is no lack of the same sight in Christian England, if for "palkie-bearers" we read "flymen." It has been observed that about two thousand of the London cab-drivers enjoy their Sabbath; a small number out of fourteen thousand. This great blessing, small as it is in proportion to the evil still existing, has been in part obtained by the means of six-day plates.* This act of grace, however, only extends to London and Dublin; for these towns it was obtained through the influence of Lord Palmerston. A deputation of cabmen having waited upon him, he said, "I like to row my own boat on a Sunday, but I don't see why you should be *compelled* to work on a Sunday." We most earnestly appeal to the religious inhabitants of

* The meaning of the six-day plates, is, that in pursuance of a recent Legislative Act, a man is not compelled to pay for a seventh day, if he only wishes to work his cab on six days.

Brighton and other large towns, to obtain the extension of the six-day licences to such places.

The good which has been done, though small in comparison with the evil which remains, should have the effect of stirring us up to do more. In the first place, we have no hesitation in placing the revival of the Sabbath, amongst them, as one of the first means to be used in bringing cabmen, flymen, omnibus-men, and all others of the same fraternity to the knowledge of God, of salvation, in restoring them to their place as members of a Christian church, in a Christian community. In the second place we would say, send missionaries among them, who shall teach them to make a good use of the Sabbath when obtained, who shall speak to them of Christ, and shew them the way of life. They will gladly receive such. The London cabmen will dismount from their cabs to hold conversations with the missionary when they see him coming; when they see him distributing tracts they often say, "Do not pass me by, sir;" and most dear and welcome, are his visits in cases of sickness. The wife of a sick cab-driver went once from stand to stand for three weeks, seeking the missionary. In the third place, help that missionary in every plan which he, or others, may adopt for their benefit; in establishing the reading-room as a substitute for the public-house; the loan library, the provident society, the Bible-class. But, above all things, let us free ourselves of the sin of depriving cabmen of their Sabbath. Let it no longer be in the power of any

master to say to a cabman or flyman, by word or deed, "*You can rest when you're dead.*" There surely should not be in Christian England any class of men, who can feel that for them the Sabbath bells must chime in vain.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD HOUSES AND NEW.

HOWEVER great may be the triumphs of the intellect of man, in whatever department of art, science, or knowledge of any kind they may be considered, those triumphs could never have been achieved, had not God given him a hand to execute, as well as a head to design; without the hand the painter might conceive, but he could not pourtray, the engineer might contrive, but he could not execute; and, what would learning be without letters?* That which the hand is to the human body, the working classes are to the body politic. If it is the office of the hand to work for the "head," it is equally the office of the "head" to think for "the hand." Now there are few evils to which the labouring classes are exposed, and the consequences of which seem less comprehended by them, than unfit dwellings, habita-

* We do not forget the Greek sage, who considered this invention as detrimental to the exercise of the intellect, by rendering knowledge too easy of acquisition!

tions unhealthy, ill-drained, ill-ventilated, without a supply of water, and over-crowded to a degree which generates disease. In some cases they *cannot* remedy the evil, in other cases they *will not*, because they are ignorant of its fatal consequences.

Look at this cottage. It stands in a pleasant garden, in a pleasant village; it is sufficiently large for the family; there are no conditions whatever to render it unhealthy, except the carelessness of the builder; the foundation has been sunk too deep, consequently the whole garden, back and front, drains into the kitchen, the common sitting-room of the family, and trickles over the brick floor. A person of the educated classes would not inhabit such a house, but the well-to-do villager does. Why? In the first place, there is such a scarcity of cottages, that he probably could not get another sufficiently near his work; in the second, he does not recognise the probable consequences of such a state of things upon his own health, or that of his family.

With regard to the over-crowding of dwellings, the poor are helpless; in London, and other great towns, their houses are pulled down, and the ground appropriated to other purposes. What can they do? After all that has been said and written about sanitary reform, it is mortifying to find the same destructive agency at work upon the habitations of the poor; whole rows of humble dwellings being swept away, to make room for the expanding terminus, or the handsome street. Whenever the latter rises up in the

place of squalid courts and alleys, the inquiry ought to be made, "Where are the people who used to inhabit this locality? how have they been provided for?" The squalid courts and alleys ought indeed to be cleansed, but it is reformation, not destruction, that is wanted.

"By far the greater part of the year," says a city missionary, in speaking of a poor invalid in Rosemary Lane, "he is confined to his small, back, close room, with a dark staircase. I have often wondered that children do not fall down almost every day, as there is hardly a gleam of light; and if two persons were to meet, they could not, as a matter of course, distinguish one another. There is a great outcry about sanitary reform just now, and glad I am to hear it; but unless it goes to the extent of pulling down such houses as the one in question, and *erecting those that will admit light and air*, and allow of other necessary accommodation, there will be little advantage;" "*and erecting others*," be it noticed; the work of demolition, apart from that of restoration, only aggravates the evil. For instance, "out of 1023 houses that have been generally inspected during the quarter," says the Sanitary Report of London, "474 have been especially examined as to the number of occupants, the condition and cubic capacity of the rooms, the number of beds in each room, and the price paid for the weekly rental of it. In this way 2208 rooms have been most circumstantially inspected, and the general result is, that nearly all of them are filthy, or overcrowded, or imperfectly drained, or badly ven-

tilated, or out of repair. In 1989 of these rooms, all, in fact, that are at present inhabited, there are 5791 inmates, belonging to 1576 families; and to say nothing of the too frequent occurrence of what may be regarded as a necessitous overcrowding, where the husband, the wife, and young family of four or five children, are cramped into a miserably small and ill-conditioned room, there are numerous instances, where different families are lodged in the same room, regardless of all the commonest decencies of life; where from three to five adults, men and women, beside a train or two of children, are accustomed to herd together." As a case of what is here called "*necessitous overcrowding*," let us look into this little room, in a poor street, at the west end of London. Not that the inhabitants consider themselves *particularly* badly off, far from it; their lot compared with numbers of others, is comfort. They are able to pay 5s. 6d. per week for what is considered a good sized room; it is, of course, kitchen, cellar, wash-house, bedroom, sittingroom, and all to the family; and as this family consists of a man, his wife, five children, the eldest thirteen years of age, and an old grandmother, we fear that our readers will not sympathise with the poor old woman's complaint, however reasonable it is as far as she is concerned, "that the window," which is immediately over her bed, "is opened every morning, directly they get up." In another Report on the Public Health, for the year 1858, it is calculated, there are 100,000 deaths every

year, which ought not fairly to take place; of se
causes assigned for this frightful overplus, four are,
drainage, impurity of water, want of air, and o
crowded and uncleansed habitations.

We give, from the journals of two city missiona
two cases, illustrative of the hardships entailed on
poor, by the act of pulling down their dwelli
without building up others suitable for them;
one is a collective, the other an individual one.
the first, the hardship was averted; in the sec
it fell heavily on the sufferer.

Upon the Rag Fair district were a number of s
courts connecting two great thoroughfares. Tow
these, a railway company cast a longing eye; t
covered just the space wanted for the extension of t
premises; it mattered not that these courts were
modest homes of a number of working men. W
claims can stand before the great advancing wav
traffic? The landlord was aggrieved. He felt h
self bound, in case his tenants were dispossessed
find them other abodes, and such were not to be l
The houses were clean, and kept in good repair;
locality brought many city gifts to the inmates, h
for the aged, clothes and schooling for the childr
for all, a doctor in sickness, a lending library,
Should these courts be pulled down, what was to
come of the people? As for the aged, there v
nothing but the workhouse for them; the youn
might shift as well as they could. Before, howev
the railway could swallow this mouthful, an Act

"He Rented a House and a Shed, where he sold Coals and Wood

Parliament must be obtained; and the evidence of the missionary and others, proving the injury to the humbler classes, stayed the evil, or rather, we should say, diverted its course; "for," says the missionary, "it is possible Blue Anchor Yard and other parts may be taken for this purpose, and the inmates of those courts will find a difficulty in getting dwellings elsewhere; *but it is a common case.*"

The other is an instance of individual suffering; it came under the notice of the missionary of the London Bridge District. Some years since, when he first visited the neighbourhood, he became acquainted with a family who lived in Custom-house Court. The father was a steady, industrious man; he rented a house and a shed, where he sold coals and wood; he was also a boot and shoe maker, in which business he had a very good trade. The family were very well off, but their prosperity did not indispose them from receiving gladly the visits of the missionary; the father especially, listened to these instructions, and learned that he had a duty to fulfil towards God, as well as towards man. The lease of his house expired; and as the buildings were about to be pulled down to make room for chambers, he was compelled to remove off the district, and the missionary lost sight of him. At the end of several years, the once prosperous coal-seller and shoemaker called at his house, poor, miserable, and haggard; he had come to ask the missionary's assistance, we must not say to beg. For a long time he was so overcome by his feelings, that the

missionary could not understand what he wanted, or how he could be of any use to him; at length he succeeded in comprehending the sad story. It seems that when the man was turned out of his house, he could not succeed in getting any other suitable one in the same locality; he kept moving about from place to place, and lost his coal trade, and much of his connection in the boot line; his family meanwhile increased, he had now nine children, the youngest but a few days old; a "distress" rightly so named, had been put in the house, and the landlord had sold and taken away from under her, the poor mother's bed. The shoemaker's object was to borrow ten shillings of the missionary; he had an opportunity, he said, of making a little money in his trade, if he could buy materials.

It is easier, as in the cases mentioned above, to give instances of the sufferings entailed upon the labouring poor on account of the want of proper dwellings, from town life than from village life; not only because such instances are more frequent in the one case than in the other, but because there are so many more facilities of bringing them to light,—the city missionary, the Scripture reader, the district visitor, have constant opportunities of obtaining the knowledge of these things, and are fearless in exposing them. But the evil, though less known and of course less extensive, does yet exist in country villages, and to such a degree, that in some places the character of the inhabitants is degraded by it. In others, as in

the case of the drainage from the garden, it is their health which suffers.

We remember a village, or rather, an outlying hamlet, about two miles distant from a place of great resort in one of the most beautiful parts of England. A little cottage stood back from the road which, we were told, was tenanted by an old woman called "Happy Bert," from her cheerful and contented temper. Attracted by such a reputation, we took the liberty of calling. We stepped from the garden into a pretty comfortable little room, and made a pleasant visit. The poor old woman's chief grievance, so far as we can remember, was, "she could hardly walk to church now, it was so far,—no, not even if she sat down by the way." Before going away, something was said which occasioned us to look into her bedroom. What a place! fit for the frogs which probably tenanted a piece of black water close beside it. In this same hamlet the scarcity of cottages was so great, that a shed had been converted, with little alteration, into two dwellings. Sometimes the objection to building more cottages has its rise with the farmers: they do not want more poor in the parish; sometimes with the squire, he does not choose his land to be so occupied.

"Sultan!" said a woman in Eastern story, "since you will not restore the little inheritance you have wrongfully taken from me, do me at least the favour to lift this sack of earth upon my mule." The Sultan, says the story, tried, but could not succeed, it was too

heavy. "If that is so, replied the suppliant, "how will you bear the burden of the whole in the day of judgment?"

"The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all." If it is not right to say to the poor, "Stand thou there, or Sit here under my footstool," neither is it right to deprive them of a proper place of habitation, or to thrust them forth to make way for the increasing demands of wealth and luxury.

CHAPTER V.

THE LITTLE VAGRANT.

IN former days there was a poem popular in the nursery, beginning with the words, "I was not born without a home," &c., the moral intended, being, that children should be thankful for a Christian home. We would go further, and ask not only them, but grown-up people also, to pity and to help those who have no such blessing.

In the summer months, not very long ago,* a poor little fellow, about twelve years old, was brought by a police constable into the magistrate's court at Shoreham, near Brighton. He looked very miserable; his head was shaved, and there was a plaster on his forehead. What was the charge against him? On the Saturday before, at eleven o'clock at night, he was found sleeping in an outbuilding at Kingstow, and had before been seen, on that same evening, begging. Well, what account had he to give of himself? The defendant, *i. e.*, the little Vagrant,

* August 1859.

crying, said "he had not seen his mother since May." The magistrate questioned him further. "He was a native of Cheshire," he said; "he was twelve years old; he travelled along the coast." "How had he got that wound on his forehead?" "He had been hurt by a glass-bottle thrown on him, while he was asleep in a boat." "What had become of his hair?" "It had been all cut off by a travelling man." What could the magistrates do with him? They committed him to the prison at Petworth for fourteen days.

What is to become of him afterwards? What had he done? He had been found, first, begging, and afterwards sleeping in an outhouse. Let us look at him as "the little prisoner," with his head shaved, his prison dress, his weary, dejected countenance. He looks like a boy who never knew boyhood; we fear he never did; childhood and youth are gifts of God, unknown, in a certain sense, to the poorest of the poor. "How silly he must have been to have allowed his hair to be cut off," says some reader. Silly, indeed! It is one, perhaps, of the saddest parts of the picture, in the case of these children of the streets, that sometimes a sort of cretinism, an imbecility, seems to steal over them, benumbing the faculties of mind and body—the consequence, probably of bad food, bad clothing, bad air, and bad treatment.

When his story appeared in our magazine,* the

* Now the *Coral Missionary Magazine*. Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

hearts of Christian people were moved with compassion; some sent money, and one gentleman promised, that whatever was wanting to support the child, at a Refuge, he would pay.

We wrote to the prison, but the fortnight was long expired, and the "little vagrant" was gone. The governor humanely replied—"Your letter of yesterday has duly reached me, and I beg to say that, to the chaplain and myself, it is a source of great pleasure to receive such an one from a person utterly unknown to us, as we frequently have committed to our care objects well deserving of sympathy, and but few persons to assist in our humble but earnest endeavours for their welfare. The boy Jacob Evans was committed in the early part of last August, for fourteen days only, and has, therefore, long since left us. He informed me that he had no father living, and that his mother resided in Chester. I cannot now charge my memory correctly, but I believe his mother wrote to him while here, urging his return home, but that he was unwilling to return in his then state. I gave him a pair of shoes and a trifle of money, and recommended him to go to Portsmouth or Southampton, and try to get a berth on board ship, in any capacity he could fill. He seemed to take to that advice, and promised to follow it out; so that I fear your benevolent intentions cannot, in his case, be made available. I would add that *no special instructions* were received with him, so that he was discharged from the prison in the ordinary course."

Why did he not go home? Ah, who can say! Perhaps it was wickedness, perhaps wretchedness; but the culprit was only twelve. Could a child in such a state obtain employment on board a vessel? We judged not; because the poorest thief who desires to reform and go to sea, requires three or four pounds for an outfit. The next step, therefore, was to apply to the police-stations at Shoreham, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Chester. With what success!

SHOREHAM, *October* 25.

"I have made every inquiry respecting the boy Jacob Evans; but I am not able to give the slightest information as to his whereabouts. He has never been in my district since he was sent to prison."

"CHESTER, *Nov.* 4.

"In answer to your letter of inquiry, I beg to say, that I have for some days caused a strict search to be made through this town, but I cannot learn that a boy answering to the description has ever lived here. Should I, however, hear that he has been seen at any time, I will immediately acquaint you."

"PORTSMOUTH, *Oct.* 29.

"I beg to report that, inquiring for Jacob Evans, the boy described in the letter given me yesterday, I have ascertained that a boy answering his description *has been* for several nights at the Sailors' Home in Portsea, and was there *yesterday morning*. The

steward of the Home has promised to detain him if he comes there again."

Only "yesterday morning!" Well, now it seemed as though we should be sure to find him; but no. That "yesterday" had no "to-morrow," so far as any traces of "the little vagrant" were concerned.

"PORTSMOUTH, *Nov.* 2.

"I beg to report I have inquired for the boy described in the accompanying letter at every common lodging-house in the borough, but I have not heard anything beyond what I stated in my last report on this subject."

The child being found at Portsmouth so late as Oct. 28th, justified our opinion that he would not be able to obtain employment on board a vessel. He was therefore still, "the little vagrant." In the silent and wakeful hours of the night we thought of this boy, so neglected, and yet so cared for; a Christian home provided for him, and he probably sleeping not in an outhouse—for it was no longer the balmy days of summer—but on some filthy heap of rags, in some degraded and degrading lodging-house. We applied to a missionary, well known for his labours among thieves and outcasts. "I would suggest," he replied, "first, that all the nightly asylums be visited in London, and the description of the boy left with each master, which I will undertake to see done, if

you think right. It is possible he may have come to London, and if each nightly shelter is visited, it should be on one night, which may be done by four persons. If that does not succeed, then advertise in the *Hue and Cry*."

The first of these means was tried in vain. He could not be found in the lodging-houses. An advertisement in the *Hue and Cry* was not allowed. It is only allowed in the case of criminals; though, we think, it is rather a contradiction that a child should be committed to prison for an offence which is not recognised as a crime. As to children being *permitted* to beg or to "travel," we only wish the laws were more stringent than they are, and more stringently administered. But the prison was not the proper place for such a child, nor the streets when he left the prison. Will he ever be found? or is he lost and gone, sunk in the depths of the criminal population? We cannot say; we can only commend the circumstances of the case to the prayerful consideration of every one who ever loved a Child.

CHAPTER VI.

WAITING TO DIE; OR, THE AGED POOR.

IN Norway, there is no public provision for the poor. We hope this is a proof that there are no poor; a proof that every man and every woman willing to work, is able to live. But, be it so, even in such a golden age as this, there is still a class, we find, who need the charity of others, the Aged. The Norwegian farmers are therefore required to divide among themselves the care of those unhappy beings, by receiving one into the household, who goes by the name of "the family pauper," and is employed in gathering wood, and other offices not requiring strength, or ability to labour. The following scene of the life and occupations of such an inmate is given by an English traveller, as taking place in the house of a peasant farmer in a Norwegian valley. "The farm-house was a dirty gloomy place; the family, consisting of the master, and six or seven house-men and house-women, were supping together on a sort of cement, which they spooned out of a common

bowl. The bowl stood on a rude table or block, and they stood round it, dipping, by turns, spoon and spoon about. It was dark, and the large timbered room was lighted only by a blazing band of resinous pine bark twisted together into a long stick or scroll, which was held at arm's length over head by an aged man, with long white beard and silver hair, who stood so still, and looked so withered, that he seemed like a frozen mummy, filled with grey glass eyes, and glued to the ground as a permanent candlestick. He was the 'family pauper,' standing in humble servitude, and waiting his turn when the general meal is done."*

Do we look at such a picture with grief and shame? Do we say, the custom is a barbarous one? That none but those in whose hearts God has placed the natural feelings of relationship, can ever be expected to bear with the infirmities, and the querulousness, or administer to the helplessness, of age? The custom is indeed a barbarous one, it must have been adopted without a due consideration or understanding of the selfishness of human nature; but, bad as it is, we think it is only a small degree harder than the lot of many of the poor, in the aged-wards of our great workhouses.

We have seen a ward, containing, we should think, some thirty beds, all tenanted by men or women, perhaps above the age of sixty, perhaps above the age of seventy, according to the regulations of the ward, each too infirm ever to leave the room, or take a

* "Through Norway with a Knapsack."

meal in common with others; a large number perhaps, only able to move a few steps from the bedside; each and all waiting to die, bereft of every solace of life, and comfort of age, except the bare supply of bodily necessaries.

In former days, the benevolence of Christian people flowed out largely upon the aged. The almshouse, the hospital, not for the sick, but for the aged,* the weekly, the yearly dole, some indeed lost, or become customs fallen into disuse, but some still remaining to the present time, attest the mindfulness of past generations of the Scriptural command, "Thou shalt honour the old man."

Now, it is all PROGRESS. It is upon the vagrant boy, the erring mother, the juvenile delinquent, the young criminal, or, in the case of the honest poor, on the labouring man, the factory girl, the distressed needlewoman, that all eyes are turned; not, indeed, until such attention was much needed; the voice of God himself in His word has aroused in the hearts of His disciples the remembrance, that the poor are a charge from Him; ages of neglect and indifference to that charge have accumulated on the heads of the present generation, an appalling amount of destitution and misery on the one hand, of duty and responsibility on the other. But, however earnest may be the efforts to meet these responsibilities, and, however, in many respects successful, there still remain

* There exists such an one in the High Street, Guildford, for twelve old men, and, we think, twelve old women.

certain omissions, unaccountable omissions, as it appears to us, among which may be placed the care of the aged poor.

We suppose that it will be readily acknowledged, that it is, in many cases, entirely impossible for the most sober, honest, and industrious labouring man to lay by, in the time of health and strength, a sufficiency for himself and his wife to live upon in old age. Destitution in age would often occur even in a better class, if individuals were dependent for a livelihood wholly upon their own personal exertions, or upon what they had been able to save; but it often happens, as we all know, that the shop or the business, which has been established in the years of youth and strength, continues to afford a livelihood to its possessor, when carried on by others under his superintendence. This is not the case with the labouring man; directly he ceases to be able to do a day's hard work, he begins to be dependent upon his former earnings, his children, charity, or the parish. The two former sources continually fail, the third is very precarious, the fourth alone remains. "I can't get work now," said a good workman once to us, "I'm getting old, I can't see so well, and folks likes a younger hand." His poor old wife is bedridden, having caught a violent cold when out washing. Her husband has nursed her upon the whole with the greatest kindness, though her sufferings from rheumatism are so intense, that the old man will sometimes leave the house in an agony of mind, in the middle of the sum-

mer nights, and go wandering about the town. His almost sole aim in life is, to be permitted to nurse her still, by keeping himself and her out of the workhouse; and a very difficult task it is. It is incredible what an amount of self-denial the respectable aged poor will submit to, and what exertions they will make to labour, long after the threescore years and ten are passed, rather than run the risk of abiding under the "hard knocker." "'Tis not even," said a poor old woman, whose words we have before quoted, "as though the house were in my native place, where I know people, it's down, down a long ways off, and once when I was there, I didn't have enough to eat, though for the matter of that, I daresay, 'tud be enough now." This poor woman has led an irreproachable life, but in the midst of health and strength, she caught a dreadful fever washing some hospital linen; it enfeebled her constitution, and injured her eyesight, so that of late years she has only been able "to grub on somehow." She is a widow, and earns sixpences by odd jobs, often by taking care of her neighbours' babies, a task not a little trying to an aged, feeble, half-blind, and half-decrepit woman. "Ah," said another, "Mrs H—— died this morning, and people say it's only an old woman; so unfeeling of them!"

It ought always to be borne in view, especially with regard to the poor, that it is not our duty, generally speaking, to do the work of others, but to help them to do their own. Parents are bound to provide for their children, children are bound to take care of

their aged parents, yet in London and its suburbs alone, between 6000 and 7000 persons die every year in workhouses, of whom it may be safely assumed that by far the larger portion are aged; those who, having fulfilled, and many of them honourably and well, the humble duties of their lowly life, and having passed the span of man's working days, have long been waiting to die. Why is this? From the same cause that there are thousands of children in the streets. But the street leads to the gaol, the workhouse but to the grave; it may therefore be urged, that, as regards the death of the aged in the workhouse, that society is not injured by the sufferings of the individual. Without dwelling upon the selfishness of such an argument, it may be pronounced an untrue one, inasmuch as society is always injured by neglect of duty, and they, who have been harsh and undutiful children, are not likely to become, in their turn, kind and careful parents.

As a general rule, we think it may be said, that the poor are not wanting in filial affection. Multitudes among them put by a portion of their wages, or their earnings, to assist their old parents; many make great exertions to support them; and probably, if a little judicious help were given, the number of those who die in workhouses would be greatly lessened.

To support an aged father and mother is distinctly recognised as a *duty* among the labouring classes. "What do you mean," said an inspector of schools (Mr Brookfield) to a class of boys, "by 'that state of

life to which it shall please God to call you?' To what state of life are you likely to be called?" A lad about eleven years old, living on the banks of the Thames, replied—"To be a waterman."

"Well, how would you do your duty in that state?"

"Take no more passengers than the licence says."

"Well, anything besides?"

"Behave well to the passengers."

"Anything else?"

"Land 'em dry on the other side."

"Anything else?"

"Ask no more than the reg'lar fare."

"Well, anything further?"

"Keep some of the money for *my father and mother.*"

How many cases are constantly coming under the notice of visitors in the poor dark dwellings of our great city, where the child inhabits one small apartment with an aged parent, supported by that child's industry! One such picture rises up before us as we write. It is a little room in a court in Rag Fair, over a stable. Here alone, a year ago, lived an old widow, supported in part by an unmarried son. She was still, however, able to work a little, and during the seven years of her widowhood had earned a portion of her living by washing and smoothing clothes. Her son was a sailor, and, of course, during the greater part of his time absent from home. This son, her darling son, perished under the most sorrowful and cruel circumstances, ill-usage at sea.

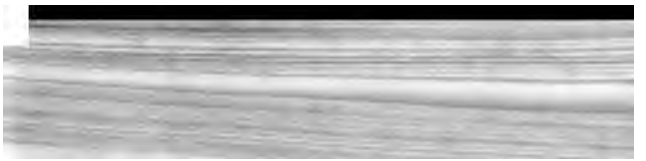
His linen, steeped in his blood, was all that ever reached his mother. Old age, creeping on under such a burden of grief, stayed the poor woman's power to labour; a daughter took the place of the son, and now supports her mother and herself on her small wages of seven shillings per week, earned in a packing warehouse. The rent of the room is two shillings and sixpence per week. Should the daughter's health fail, or work be slack, nothing remains for the mother so loved and cherished, but the "hard knocker."*

The threescore years and ten press as heavily on the working man as on the aged widow; the man's aged ward in the workhouse is a sight quite as much calculated to move compassion as the woman's; in some respects more so, inasmuch as constant control, confinement, and dependence, are even more irksome to a man than to a woman.

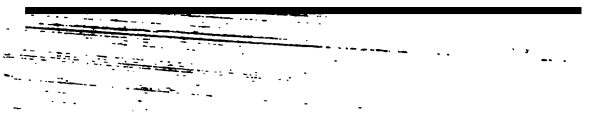
Life, in extreme old age, closes but too often after a long twilight; "strength," as the Scripture says, "has become labour and sorrow, the grasshopper is a burden, and desire fails." In the summing up of the events of even a moderately prosperous life, the joys must be outweighed by the pains, the success by the losses and crosses; and even in a Christian life, the sins and regrets outweigh the deeds well done. When want is joined to age, the lot is indeed hard to be

* We are glad to be able to say, that the same kind lady who pensioned the "Hot-potato Woman," has extended her help to this poor bereaved mother.

borne ; "therefore," saith the Scripture, which provides for the flowing forth of human affections and human help upon every object which hath need thereof, and manifests the compassion of the Lord to the aged as well as to the young, to those waiting to die, as well to those just setting forth in the race of life—"thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God : I am the ord."



Concluding Chapter.



GOD has placed one half of the service which mankind are to render to Him, in their service of one another, but only one half. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,—thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The "too much serving," even for Christ's sake, should never take us from sitting at His feet to hear His words, when our place ought to be there.

We are afraid, however, that the service rendered by most of us is too little; we are afraid that the rule of charity, so far as money is concerned, is to give what we can spare, rather than to spare that we may give, or, as the Bible tells us, to *labour* that we may have to give; it is the giving on a definite scale, in *proportion to our income*, which is wanting in many of us.

There is another gift we are backward in offering to the Lord, and that is, our personal service, *i. e.*, a portion of our time. A young woman in the ardour

and enthusiasm of youth, and early lo
of Christ, applied to the wife of a cle
neighbourhood for "something to do.
give money," the latter coldly replied. "
it seemed nothing, and it *was* nothi
nothing in comparison with what she l
Money, however, *is* a valuable gift, a
doing good to others, though not *so* val
Several of our Lord's parables relate to
i. e., doing good to others by *minister*
Angels are called "ministering spirits
of salvation, and our Lord directs us to
may do the will of God on earth, as i
them in heaven; He Himself came t
Generally speaking, there is no gift so d
tain from others as *time*. If we were t
some person, who could give it, for a mi
pose, and of another, who could also give
for the same, we think we should obtain
more easily than we should obtain the fi

In our scenes from the homes of wor
we have given examples of many who ha
to do; now there are many others in this
have too little to do. The burdens of a l
would be greatly lessened, if those who
would help to bear them. The poor
many hardships they need not endure,
influence, time, and habits of thought
them. Many of the educated classes ha
and there is no class in which there a

number of persons unemployed, and to whom such employment upon a recognised system would be more acceptable, than Women.

One great cause of our deficiencies in the care of the poor, is the want of an organised system of Women's labour. There is no teacher of childhood like a woman; no nurse of the sick like a woman; no ministrations at the domestic hearth like those of a woman. When once the heart of a woman has been won to the love of Christ, it is her happiness, her delight, to be employed in works of mercy. The truth of this is attested by the large number of voluntary workers among us; not only would that number be immensely increased, but their work would be rendered more useful and stable, if it were conducted on a fixed plan.

In desiring an organisation for Women's Work in the Church, we deprecate all orders, vows, and institutions; any interference, in short, whatever, with the conventional usages of society, so far as those usages are in accordance with the spirit and precepts of Christianity. We especially deprecate all interference whatever with the question of marriage. Let a woman's devoting herself to the service of the Church be no more a hindrance to her marriage, should she wish to marry, than it is to a man to take orders. Free labour for Christ in a free home, is what we claim for women. One argument used in favour of institutions is, that many unmarried women have no home. To this we answer, there are very

few women who have no social or family ties, and it is in the cultivation of such that a woman's ministering work begins. If she is not a wife or a mother, she is probably a daughter, a sister, or a kinswoman. Of those who are left entirely alone in the world, when such cases occur, let two or three live together if they are so minded. An institution is not a family, nor anything at all like it. Another objection to institutions is, that women should work as helpers to man, not wholly apart from him, and, still less, under the sole direction of a clergyman. Had these institutions taken root in our country, it would be well to follow the rule of doing our own work, and leaving others to do theirs in their own manner; but they have not, and, therefore, the matter may be considered as an open and debateable question. But if we deprecate the idea, that to serve the Church of Christ women must necessarily be single, we are equally opposed to the opinion that they must necessarily be married. We are told that, in the early Church,* widows who had been mothers were preferred for the office of deaconesses, in order that, "having had a training in all human affections, they might know how to aid others both by sympathy, and counsel." But the sympathy, the tenderness, the feelings of a mother, are indigenous in the heart of a woman, they are implanted there by God Himself.

* See a quotation from Tertullian, in the *Quarterly Review* for November 1860, in an able article upon "Deaconesses." We presume, however, entirely to differ from the views of the writer.

They are in no need of cultivation, they grow wild, like the primroses in the woods. One great allurement of religious employment to women is, that it affords an outlet for those warm and overflowing affections which, in the case of the unmarried, have sometimes but few earthly objects on which to expend themselves. Let the question of marriage be entirely set aside in the organisation of women's labour. Nobody can tell whether Phœbe, Persis, Dorcas, Tryphena, and Tryphosa, &c., were married or not.

We deprecate, also, any unnecessary interference with dress, *i. e.*, the assumption of a particular costume. In the first place, dress is an index to the character—an index which we do not think it wise to dispense with, in any class of women. In the second place, a woman who surrenders the choice of her dress, surrenders a *great means of usefulness among her own sex*—the usefulness of a good example. It is far more easy to adopt a costume, than to withstand foolish fashions. It may be said, the influence of religious women has proved totally inefficacious to stay the flood of folly in matters pertaining to dress in our day. If it has, certainly the adoption of a particular costume would produce no better effect; in fact, under these circumstances, the influence of example is altogether lost. A woman's regulation of her dress is part of her duty as a Christian; the Apostle gives her rules for it. It has been said also, that women, left free to choose their own dress, would spend too much time upon it. Such

women cannot have learned the rudiments of those laws of Christianity, obedience to which alone can fit them for a life of religious usefulness. Another argument is, a peculiar dress inspires confidence in a sick room. That is a matter of opinion. We confess ourselves we should feel quite the reverse; and so, we think, would the Poor. We would rather be nursed by a person not marking, by any particular habiliment, a separation from ourselves in the duties and trials, the joys and sorrows of social life. The spirit of Christianity is pre-eminently a social spirit; our Lord did not give us the example of any separation from the world of this nature; and, we think, He does not teach His followers to practise such.

What *do* we want, then? What *do* we claim in behalf of womanhood? To help in the missionary and charitable work which men have already undertaken, and to add to it such objects as may be peculiarly suitable to our sex; such, for instance, as nursing the sick, teaching women their domestic duties, &c. We want women to be allowed to render their fair share of help; not the volunteer, and but too often desultory, help of those who have only to fill up, according to their own inclination, their leisure hours; but the recognised, efficient help of those whose business it is, to the due discharge of which their life is devoted. Except, however, as the clergyman's wife, the missionary's wife, an Englishwoman —and, let us remember, how large is the number in our country of those who, the Apostle tells us, are

the most free to attend upon the service of the Lord without distraction, the Unmarried—has no fixed or responsible duty in the Church open to her. If, indeed, as we have before said, she happens to have money and time at her own disposal, she may volunteer a few services; but, after all, these services can be but small in comparison with those of the regular labourer. "Ah!" said one of this class once to a more favoured individual, "how happy you are! You have a portion of the Lord's work assigned to you, a place in the household. I am only like the little errand-boy, who runs here and there on a job occasionally!"

Let all our large Missionary Societies, both for home and foreign work, follow the example which has been nobly given by a few, and employ, in the place which befits them, female agents. We are not sure to what extent the Bible-Women's Mission is connected with the Bible Society; but we believe that, at any rate, the attempt was *first* made in connection with it, and under its sheltering protection; the "Country Towns' Mission" have long employed women as agents; they were, they say, the first in the field; and last, not least, the Church Missionary Society has lately sent out three ladies to labour in connection with it—not in schools, the only work hitherto thought fit for women, but as Sisters among Sisters in the Zenanas of the east. None of these plans, however, altogether meet the want of women's labour. The two former only include, as paid

agents, women of the uneducated class, and the latter employment is as yet not remunerative; nevertheless, it is the first step in a good cause, and may God prosper it!

This leads us to the consideration of another important subject as regards women's work in the Church; shall it be a paid agency? To which we reply, Most certainly—we do not say wholly; let those who can give their services at their own expense, do so; and those who cannot, receive the proper remuneration. This need not imply anything derogatory to the latter; it is a principle fully recognised in Scripture, that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." The woman-worker need not, therefore, be esteemed less earnest, disinterested, or faithful, because she receives it. It would be a great mistake to limit the labour of women in the Church to those who have *time to give*. There are six millions of women in the United Kingdom, of whom three millions are obliged to earn their own living. While, for want of a paid agency, none of them can do so in the Church, it is evident that a very numerous, and also a very useful class of women must be, in a great measure, excluded from such service. The honour of supplying a "missing link" in the Church has been claimed for Bible-women; but, yielding to this organisation the hearty admiration it so justly deserves, we contend it is only half the "missing link" while it does not recognise the paid employment of educated women. We want Bible-ladies, as

well as Bible-women. "Woman," indeed, is a far more comprehensive word, and one of higher meaning than "lady;" but we use "lady" now, as we said in the first chapter, in our Saxon ancestors' acceptation of the term, Hlafdige—"a giver of bread"—one presiding over the household, or holding such a place in the household of faith. There are many services in the Church which a poor woman can render better than a lady, but there are also many services which a lady can render better than a poor woman; that is, supposing them both to be equal in religious knowledge and experience.

We further submit to the consideration of our countrymen and countrywomen, that all plans at present organised for the employment of women in the Church, recognise the fact that it ought to be, in some sense at least, remunerative; that is to say, it ought not to exclude those who are without fortune. The Romish Church owes no inconsiderable portion of its popularity, its degree of usefulness, in administering to the temporal wants of the sick and the poor, and its hold upon the affections of the people, to the offices which are discharged in it by women, or to use a term by which our meaning will be more distinctly understood, by ladies. The Protestant Churches abroad open also a gate of entrance to the harvest field for their female disciples, recognising the same fact, *i. e.*, the need that the labour should be remunerative; for we submit that food, clothing, lodging, the supply of every bodily want during health and sickness, and a pro-

vision for old age, is payment ;* what more than this would the small stipend likely to be received by any woman afford? If it should be said that this is payment in a different manner from the receiving of a fixed salary, will any one pursue the argument to its conclusion and say, that for this reason the labours of an incumbent are more likely to be useful than those of a curate?

In desiring an organisation for women's work in the Church, our object, in the first place, is a religious one. "Social improvement," "sanitary reform," and all that it includes, water, air, light in their dwellings, healthful recreation, help in sickness, in destitute childhood, and still more destitute old age, all that we wish to secure for the poor is secondary to the object of communicating to them the knowledge of God. Those women, therefore, who go forth into the world on errands of love and mercy, should go forth in the name of the Lord, His servants doing the work for the love of Christ in faith, and according to the precepts of the gospel. There should be union among them, strengthened by united prayer and united action. They should labour as those who are the helping hand and the helping heart, for Christ's sake; ministering unto the Lord in the persons of the poor, the ignorant, the sick, and the afflicted.

May God prosper every work of mercy which is

* See the regulation for the employment of Protestant deaconesses abroad.

undertaken in faith and love amongst us, both by men and women, and give a large increase, until the country cottage in the neglected village shall share in the pity shewn for the London alley; till rich and poor shall feel, each for each, a mutual sympathy in each other's trials and sorrows; and an indifference to the common wants of humanity among the labouring classes, no longer fill up the measure of the Sins of the Day!

Appendix.

LET us make a beginning." Whenever any person consults me about missionary work, if it is such as I wish to engage in, I always say, "However small it may be, let us make a beginning. If it pleases God to prosper it, if it works well, it will increase." In missionary work there is no need to project great undertakings. Put a little seed into the ground, and, if it takes root, it will of itself become the mustard-tree. In the course of the preceding narratives, I have made mention once or twice of the *Coral Missionary Magazine*, which took its name from the Coral Missionary Fund. "What DO you mean," my friends and subscribers sometimes say, "by the word 'Coral?'" I reply, "I mean the fund is like the Coral reef, or the Coral island. That is formed by the labours of myriads of tiny insects, so the Coral Fund is formed by multiplied small gifts." For many years, one pound was a munificent donation, and it is by no means an inconsiderable

one, now. The plan was commenced thirteen years ago, by the project of building a mud church on the west coast of Africa, the cost of which was to be £30, and of educating one child in a church missionary school, for whose support sixty children, in a Sunday school at Devonport, kept sixty little bags, in which they deposited one penny monthly. Four churches have been since built, and there is money subscribed for a fifth. One station, in an African village, Oshielle, has been maintained under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. The little church there, under a native minister—the Rev. W. Moore —now numbers more than ninety converts and forty communicants, the majority of them being such as are counted among the poor of the land—the slave, the farm-labourer, the African costermonger, &c. It numbers also some converts among the very, very aged, both men and women, to whom the word of salvation has come, just in the last days of life;—"at evening-tide it shall be light." A Scripture-reader is supported at Sierra Leone, and the one child is now represented by between one and two hundred in the different Church Missionary schools. In India, at Bhogulpore, Madras, and Masulipatam; in Africa, at Ake, Ikija, Igbeyin, Lagos, and Otta; in North-West America, at Moose Fort. Some of these schools are almost entirely supported by the Coral Fund. Others, I trust, will soon be added to the list at Ishagga and Ijaye, and also on the Niger. A great blessing has attended these schools. Christian schoolmasters in

India, Christian mechanics and artisans in Africa, honest labourers, Christian wives and mothers in both India and Africa beginning to set forth the loveliness of a Christian home in the sight of the heathen, those who have died in the faith, and those who are still living to bring forth the fruits of it, may well rejoice the hearts of all, both at home and abroad, who have laboured and aided in this work.

The receipts for the first year, 1848, were £101, 16s. 4d.; for the past year, 1860, £1061, 16s. 9d.*

But however dear the cause of foreign missions is, and great as is the happiness of being allowed to help in it, I confess that I hold the cause of the poor at home as dearer still. It is they who may be regarded as "of our own household," as being "always with us" to receive a portion of those gifts, whether in time or money, which we can offer to the Lord. The low parts of London, the Outcast classes, and the Children of the Streets, have all been aided through the Coral Fund. In the former, on the Rag Fair and London Bridge districts, two missionaries have been, in part, supported, in connection with the London City Mission, by means of contributions to the amount of about £734. It is chiefly to the experience of these missionaries, that I am indebted for the pictures of London life, I have delineated.

* Of this snm, however, £100 must be deducted from the current monthly receipts, being the last gift of a dear friend, the late Mrs Hayne, who was during her life a constant collector and valuable coadjutor. Of another £100, also, part was subscribed for a church, and part was money paid in advance for the schools.

For the outcast classes, £190, 12s. 6d. has been expended. The labour amongst these is principally directed to the task of enabling such, as have lost by their sins, the means of earning an honest livelihood, to regain the same. The boys and girls rescued from a street life and placed in Refuges, have, some of them, been as great a source of pleasure as the rescued children of the heathen abroad.

God has granted this portion of success to the work of the Coral Fund, and answered thus far the petition, "the work of our hands establish Thou it;" and I trust the details of this success, may encourage some to help in another work, left almost untouched, and the need of which is increasingly felt—I mean an organisation for the employment of educated women in the church, whereby those women who desire it may devote themselves, in union with others, to the help of the ignorant, the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, whether they have, or have not, the means of self-support. I have proposed that the attempt should be made in connection with existing Societies, but it must be in some degree separate from them, though under their superintendence. Additional funds would of course be required. It could hardly be expected that our large societies, whose income is now insufficient for the demands upon them, and the openings before them, should devote a portion of that income to a new sphere of labour. If even a very few women would unite, those who have means to undertake it, at their own

expense, those who have not to receive support from others, it might be done. Those who could give money, but neither time nor personal service, might help with money, all being done as unto the Lord, in united faith and prayer.

As regards missions abroad, there are openings in India, and on the west coast of Africa. The Rev. H. Townsend, who was almost the first,* if not the first, European to set foot upon that unhappy coast, long ravaged by the slave trade, earnestly desires the help of a European lady. For twelve years, with the constant and efficient aid of Mrs Townsend, he has been engaged in bringing up boys and girls in the Christian faith. These girls are now becoming young women, and he pleads that the aid of a European lady is absolutely essential to carry on the work.

At home, not only our great towns, with all their necessities, but villages and rural districts, have need of missions. These latter, I think, offer a sphere peculiarly suited to women, and where their labours might be invaluable.

Let us "make a beginning, a little beginning," in the Lord, and trust that He will "establish the work of our hands upon us."

* In company with the Rev. C. A. Gollmer.

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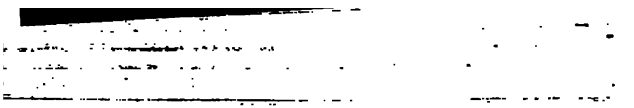


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